

# Sewanee Review

Vol. XLVIII]

[No. 2

APRIL- JUNE, 1940

*by William S. Knickerbocker*

## TRENT AT SEWANEE

THE death of William Peterfield Trent, the first editor of this QUARTERLY, on December 7, 1939 prompts a few pages of tribute by way of interpretation of a phase of his career likely to be overlooked in the more formal eulogy which one of his ablest students, Dr. William Haller, is publishing in THE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY QUARTERLY. While we cannot rightly claim that the SEWANEE REVIEW is the greatest of Trent's achievements, its very existence is a reminder of an episode and a purpose in the cultural tradition in the South.

The most convenient source for the story of the founding and subsequent history of the SEWANEE REVIEW is Dr. Lucille Turner's THE HISTORY AND CONTENTS OF THE SEWANEE REVIEW (1930) published by the George Peabody College for Teachers at Nashville, Tennessee. Trent's own statement of its founding was written for his successor, John Bell Henneman:

My recollection is that my work on the 'Life of Simms' brought me in contact with the *Southern Quarterly*, and other old Southern Reviews, and the criticism my book received emphasized the fact that the South not only needed

a literary organ but was less fortunate in that respect than it had been before the war. I also felt that the kind of literature throughout the whole country did little to supply the kind of literature that the English quarterlies gave England, and I saw no reason why the economic and political quarterlies then being published by our universities could not be paralleled in the field of literature.

The full story of the founding and vicissitudes of the SEWANEE REVIEW may appropriately be reserved for its Fiftieth Anniversary Number in October, 1941. Trent's keen civic sense in enlisting the aid of significant Southerners not only succeeded in establishing the SEWANEE REVIEW but his energetic enthusiasm for the New South in harmony with the United States, without losing its special identity and gifts, opened the way for other Southern cultural organs which more or less continued the tradition he established: THE SOUTH ATLANTIC QUARTERLY (1902), THE SOUTHWEST REVIEW (1924), THE VIRGINIA QUARTERLY REVIEW (1925), and THE SOUTHERN REVIEW.

THE SEWANEE REVIEW never aspired to be "the spokesman of the New South" even though it did aspire to be a medium for Southern writers. It has never sought to evoke a constricted provincialism which, to an uncritical mind, might be glossed into something profound by being called "regionalism". Trent was a liberal Southerner and the REVIEW he founded has always remained true to that type of "liberalism" which, while inspired by a high-minded idealism, seeks active correctives of regional flatteries by freely scrutinizing actual conditions and by disseminating worthy writing from whatever geographical source it may come. The REVIEW has not lent itself to the easy way of attracting readers by the method of outrageous assertion. It has persistently remained loyal, through many temptations to succumb to sensational appeals, to Trent's principles of a courteous and chivalric form of criticism. It has steadily sought to enrich the reflective life of the South, not by competitive programs of aesthetics or economics, rivalling those in operation, but by supplementary infusions of the region's sources for reflection.

Trent himself was too aware of certain debilitating conditions in the South to direct his energies to a direct, frontal attack on them. As a Southerner, he knew the native disposition of South-

erners to recoil under pugnacious assaults and of Southerners' proneness to rationalize unseemly conditions by the subtle, ingenious, and recuperative defence through the means of graceful verbalisms. He learned that lesson by his unhappy experience in publishing his *LIFE OF WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS* which, though not intended as a veiled criticism of Southern infelicities, brought vividly home to him the knowledge that direct assault was futile. He learned, too, that its opposite—the distractive devices of the apparently irrelevant—was much more effective in achieving a deepening and consolidation of that charm which distinguishes the South. This "charm", he believed, is a necessary *modus vivendi* for Southerners, so many of whom have the obstinacies and intellectual acutenesses of their Scotch-Irish and Huguenot ancestors. He rightly disclaimed any ambition to make the *SEWANEE REVIEW* a "spokesman of the South" except when Southerners had something to say.

Though the *SEWANEE REVIEW*, aware of its own past and the policy it inherited from Trent, was profoundly sceptical of the adequacy or applicability of the principles and programs of our contemporary "Southern Agrarians" it encouraged the writing and printed the first bulletin of that group; Mr. John Crowe Ransom's "The South—Old and New" which, altered in expression only, became the first essay in the now-famous symposium, *I'LL TAKE MY STAND*. If it questioned the proposals of the Southern Agrarians, the *SEWANEE REVIEW* recalled only too vividly the sharp resistance of the Agrarians to liberal visions of Southerners of the earlier generation: Sidney Lanier, Henry Grady, Walter Hines Page, Woodrow Wilson, William Peterfield Trent, John Spencer Bassett, Josephus Daniels, and Edwin Mims. A journalistic account of these and other Southern Liberals is available in Mr. Virginus Dabney's *LIBERALISM IN THE SOUTH* and in Edwin Mims's *THE ADVANCING SOUTH*: both of which are excellent for their purpose even though they need to be consummated by some one with leisure to investigate and integrate the pattern of ideas and activities of those earlier Southern liberals. Such a study would disclose Trent's place and significance in a Southern movement to resuscitate Southern traditions, to amplify them where they were deficient, and to disseminate them broadly where they are sound and invigorating.

## II

An observable dualism motivates the South: a dualism which, when it tends to be disjunctive, keeps rigidly separate its constituent parts. This dualism, when it is at its healthiest, is seen in the tension between traditions and conditions. Tradition is so often confused with custom, both in the South and elsewhere, that it needs to be re-defined as the oral transmission of a myth which poetically interprets and justifies the customs or way of life which prevail as "the cake of custom". Legend is the written supplement of custom; overarching both custom and legend is the collective social poetry, never completely or adequately realized, which is "tradition". Custom and its accompanying legend may, through inertia or through resisting the renovating and aerating effects of tradition, properly so called, degenerate into conditions which are unworthy of the way of life which originally inspired them, or of the tradition which created them. Conditions are existing realities which, subject to the correctives of tradition, may gain that life which is not in memorials.

If this was Trent's concept of Southern tradition, recoverable in his *LIFE OF SIMMS* and in many of his essays in the earlier issues of this *QUARTERLY*, the Southern tradition is not static but dynamic: it operates only in the struggle to attain more completely what, in the past, was only partially achieved, however beautiful for a later day to contemplate in a relaxed state of nostalgia.

Trent caught this idea from the communities in which he was born, reared, and lived as a young man. A Virginian, inheriting the rich memories of the Old Dominion, he was born in 1862, when the War was well under way. His childhood was passed amidst the devastations of that violence and its aftermath, hearing from the lips of returned Confederate soldiers not only the tales of military heroism and exploits but the rich traditions of the Virginian mind. He attended the University of Virginia and responded to its liberal tradition bequeathed by Jefferson. After a brief season as school-teacher and preparation for the Virginia Bar, he decided to become an historian and matriculated at the newly-founded John Hopkins under Herbert G. Adams, then building the great History Department there. In 1888, Trent was called to the University of the South at Sewanee, Tennessee, pre-



sumably to teach history. Under the conditions prevailing then at Sewanee, as at so many other American institutions of learning, he taught many other subjects, including English Literature. Conditions deprived him from following out his ambition to become a Professor of History: he became instead a Professor of Literature. As a scholar, both at Sewanee and later at Columbia University, he was primarily an historian using English and American literature as a documenting process for the teaching of history. It was this basic concept of literature as a contributing force to history in the making that he came to believe profoundly in the function of literature and of criticism for the emerging South.

Trent's "liberalism" was partly derived from Burke, Coleridge, Arnold, Bagehot, and Morley but it was dramatically realized for him in the immediate *milieu* of Sewanee to which he owed a debt he never failed to recognize and express. Among American universities, the University of the South is unique. It was conceived in 1837 by Christian scholars with a deliberate intention to supplement the drift towards political atomism implicit in the Southern States' Rights theory. With the directive and creative tradition of the English Church constantly in their imagination, the Episcopalian founders of Sewanee in 1857 had Newman's *IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY* in their hands as a sketch of what they proposed to establish on the ten-thousand acre site in the Tennessee wilderness. When it was formally opened in 1868, three years after the War for American Unification, the students were a mixed lot, many of them veterans of the war, ranging from eighteen to forty years of age. The faculty was one of the most remarkable ever assembled: men broadly cultured and tempered by the wisdom of the battle-field, consecrated to the vision of providing right directions for the minds of the young who were committed to their care. Generals Kirby-Smith and Gorgas were outstanding among them. With their colleagues they laid the foundations of Sewanee's traditions and customs which were faithfully preserved and transmitted until they flowered in the nineties, Sewanee's first "golden age". If a university is, as Newman thought, a place where maturing minds mingle and interact, Sewanee became (in spite of its few

buildings and small student body) one of the few real universities in the country.

Trent was not an Episcopalian in this community of Episcopalians, but he profited by the liberal tradition, sustained and encouraged by the Church which owns it. He was not disposed to affiliate himself at that time with the Episcopalian Communion. Undoubtedly, however, his mind expanded in the gentle but exacting *milieu* of that scholarly society, immunized on a plateau in beautiful rural surroundings. Intellectual activity was too powerful for him to resist. Unconsciously he responded to its excitements. He absorbed much of the wisdom and knowledge of the great soldiers, scholars, and Churchmen in whose society he daily mingled. He was not a spokesman of Sewanee except in so far as Sewanee expected him to speak what he believed. Sewanee believed in living fully and richly, and letting other people live, relying on the enriching experiences and disciplines of a Christian community in which tradition was a living and applicable power.

Yet Trent brought to Sewanee the tradition of exact historical scholarship, learned in the seminar of Herbert G. Adams at the Johns Hopkins. He also brought a keen sense of restoring the Southern tradition which Sidney Lanier was re-interpreting. He knew Lanier, admired him, and faithfully responded to his noble idealisms. The link between the ante-bellum tradition of Simms and the confused days of sullen hatreds of the nineties was, he thought, to be found chiefly in Lanier's prose and verse. The interpretation of the Southern tradition which Lanier had expounded and the alert civic sense which Lanier advocated for the direction of Southern life Trent adopted and expressed in his life of WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS, a work which was ably supported by Edwin Mims when he wrote the biography of SIDNEY LANIER. His militancy in the cause had its inevitable effects in arousing the acrimonies of *ad hominem* reprisals which, among some excitable Southerners, serve as logic. His keen wit quickly perceived the futility of direct action, though for ten years he intermittently kept up his crusade. Six years after the SEWANEE REVIEW was founded, he wrote Professor H. G. Adams at Johns Hopkins:

... The South will only be regenerated in time. . . Shallow thinking on political matters, provincialism of taste and senti-

ments—ignorance and vanity are the dominant characteristics of our people and they have got to be made to see these things before a real reformation takes place speedily.

### III

Whether that "reformation" has taken place or not is a matter for those more competent than I to say. During the Christmas holidays of 1938—just a year before his death—Trent's nephew, Dr. Henry Wells (who was born in Sewanee and is now on the Faculty of English Literature at Columbia University) arranged for a meeting between Dr. Trent and me. I had not seen Dr. Trent for several years. I found him less disabled from his paralysis than on the last occasion: he sat at a desk beside a window which gave a glorious vista of the roofs of Manhattan.

Still looking like the Robinson Crusoe I used to think him when I sat in his classes at Columbia, Trent said:

"Well, Knickerbocker, you've outlasted my time at Sewanee. I was there twelve years, and you've been there now fourteen years. How does the South treat *you*, a son of Manhattan?"

"Excellently," said I. "The people in the South pay no attention to me: or if they do, I am not aware of it. As a New Yorker, I am accustomed to being disregarded."

"There are some fine literary magazines in the South now: THE VIRGINIA QUARTERLY REVIEW, THE SOUTH ATLANTIC QUARTERLY, THE SOUTHWEST REVIEW, and that excellent periodical THE SOUTHERN REVIEW which is doing what I wanted the SEWANEE REVIEW to do, but couldn't attract the talent. How do you manage to keep the SEWANEE REVIEW alive, with all that competition?"

"Things have changed, Dr. Trent," I said. "Also the times. So far as I can see, Southern readers are following Lanier's advice: not to think a book or magazine is better *because* it is Southern or by a Southern writer. Intrinsic quality appeals to them, no matter from where it derives. I think your ambitions have been partly realized by various influences you did not anticipate: what remains is for the SEWANEE REVIEW to represent the *mind* of the South, if it cannot be its "spokesman": and that *mind* can be represented by the kind of articles and poems it prints, no matter

what the region may be of the authors. It still has an important mission to inculcate the *liberal* attitude in a day when 'liberalism' is widely reported to be defunct. A spurious *noli me tangere* 'liberalism' is dead and there are no tears for its passing. The liberalism of the SEWANEE REVIEW is a *strategic* liberalism, still pursuing the policy of conversion by making established values appear new and to mediate the experimental novelties of the present when they can be integrated with what is cherished. We recognize the 'cake of custom' as a usable necessity while we are at the same time vigilantly searching for modes of renovation."

I shall not forget Trent's hearty chuckle when he said: "I suppose you mean something, Knickerbocker, but I don't understand a word you say."

"Well," I replied, "it's only a manner of labored speech. I am simply saying what you said in a much better way in the early issues of the SEWANEE REVIEW."

My last words were, "It won't be long now before I can hand you personally a copy of the Fiftieth Anniversary Number of the SEWANEE REVIEW. May I have your consent to devote it to you and the other Southern liberals of the post-bellum period?"

Perhaps he replied: but I did not hear him speak. My friend Wells, his nephew, came in at that moment and we shifted the subject.

William Peterfield Trent's greater fame came after he left Sewanee, when he was called to Columbia University. The series of critical and scholarly books which he wrote during his long career in New York make a truly imposing monument. But he never forgot Sewanee. He remembered his days in Tennessee with the keenest pleasure and delighted in the Sewanee graduates in New York, men like Bishop Manning, who have made a deep impression on their times. It is an interesting item to record that he was confirmed by Bishop Gailor in the last decade of his life.

Nor has Sewanee forgotten him and its legend of how the youths of his Milton class once daubed on newly-whitened fences: "For sluggish minds, take Trent's Miltonics."

by J. Atkins Shackford

## SIDNEY LANIER AS SOUTHERNER

### IN RESPONSE TO CERTAIN CHARGES BY THREE AGRARIANS

**T**HAT Sidney Lanier was a Southerner seems almost too obvious to need substantiation. Most Southerners not only accept him but rather emphatically claim him, if one may judge from the general tone of their criticism. And yet, from certain quarters within the South have come charges that Lanier was never a Southerner in the true sense of the word; or that, if he was once a Southerner, he remained one only so long as the butter remained on the South side of the bread—that he followed the butter to its more Northern exposure when the bread was turned.

The difference of opinion within the South hinges, of course, on a difference in the conception of the meaning of the word *Southern*, at least in the application of the term to Lanier. There are certain qualifications demanded by both groups in common: both apply the word *Southerner* only to that person who has spent much of his life in the South, whose sympathies lie with the political, economic, and social interests of that section, and who, given the opportunity, directs his actions as best he can, in a constructive program toward a solution of that section's problems. The fundamental difference between the two groups is, I believe, one of scope. To the one group a Southerner is granted, somewhere in the periphery of his outlook, some view of and some sympathy with another section, or perhaps with other sections, or even with the nation and with the problems of the nation as a whole. He is granted the right to say, 'my section is wrong in this stand, and hence this stand in the long run will not be the best for my section to pursue.' In short, to the one group Lanier is so much more a venerable Southerner for having had a wider-than-sectional outlook, and the term *Southern* is hardly held by them to categorize and define what ideas a man shall hold.



To that small group of Southerners, on the other hand, who reject Lanier as a sincere Southerner, the appellation of *Southerner* can legitimately be applied only to that man of the South, the boundary of whose mental outlook coincides nicely with that imaginary line separating the wrong North from the right South. He must be a dyed-in-the-wool Secessionist, a fire-eating Agrarian, a whole-hearted devotee to whatever cause his section is involved or embroiled in at any given time, on the assumption that that cause is the right cause for his section. At the present time, the true Southerner, to them, is one who subscribes to the statement of principles in *I'LL TAKE MY STAND*. Those who would refuse to do so are looked upon with suspicion as men who do not have the traditional interests of their section at heart.

It is necessary in the beginning to have these distinctions between the two groups clear. I may perhaps do an injustice to the latter group. I have an idea that they would hardly agree to such a definition of their own stand in this matter. And yet, I see no other definition which would justify the spokesmen of this group in this specific charge against Lanier, that wittingly or not, he was a traitor. They formulate the grounds themselves, as I think will become obvious as we proceed in this paper.

Since a determination of whether or not Lanier was a Southerner will depend ultimately on definition, the purpose of this paper has not been that of deciding this question. Rather, accepting him as a Southerner, by our own definition, I shall try to present some of his ideas, views, and opinions relative to the South. I should like to stress quite emphatically at this point that Lanier was, if anything, a poet. Economic theory, political views, and timely propaganda we may rightfully expect to find from the economist or politician. But I believe we are hardly just to any poet if we demand that his primary attention be given to such immediate concerns. We may examine a poet to determine just what economic and political creeds he did express; but we shall not expect or demand that they be as explicit and complete as those of the economist and statesman. I believe this is not sufficiently considered by that group who term Lanier a turncoat. And as a secondary aim of this paper, I shall consider, as the appropriate occasion arises, certain charges made against Lanier by three Southern Agrarians, in so far as those charges bear on Lanier as a



Southerner. With the question of the superiority or inferiority of Lanier's art, his technique, his intellect, I shall not here be concerned.

## II

For purposes of brevity, and in order to proceed more directly to Lanier's works themselves, I shall dismiss the background with only a few remarks. Lanier was born in Macon, Georgia, February 3, 1842. His immediate lineage ran from Georgia back to Virginia on both sides, and further to England and France. The section of the South into which he was born was, according to Mims<sup>1</sup> and Starke<sup>2</sup> perhaps the most democratic section of the South at that time. "It was a democracy, it is true, working within the limitations of slavery and greatly tempered with the feudal ideas of the older states, but it was a life which gave room for the development of well-marked individual types." <sup>3</sup> Macon was one of the leading commercial cities of the South, rivalling the older cities of Savannah and Augusta, and, before the war, was a more important city than Atlanta. A great many citizens of Macon had no slaves at all, and in 1850 the white population held a three to two half-Nelson on the negro. The Laniers were of this class of non-slaveholders. Sidney Lanier's father was of the Southern class who hoped until the outbreak of the war that the Union might be preserved and the war averted. Sidney early adopted these liberal ideas of his father, from whom he also gained a love for and an encouragement in literature. We learn that some of his early favorites in literature were Burton (*ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY*), Jeremy Taylor, Keats, Chatterton, Shelley, Coleridge, Tennyson, Burns, Scott, Wordsworth, Richter, Novalis, and, as his interest in German literature increased, Heine, Schiller, Lessing, Schelling, Tieck, and Goethe.<sup>4</sup> But by far his favorites were the favorites of the cultured literary taste of the South at that time—Scott, Tennyson, Carlyle, Shakespeare. It was from this atmosphere, somewhat Calvinistic in Lanier's

<sup>1</sup>Mims, Edwin, p. 20 *passim*. SIDNEY LANIER. Houghton Mifflin and Company: 1905.

<sup>2</sup>Starke, p. 5 *passim*. SIDNEY LANIER, A Biography and Critical Study, by Aubrey Harrison Starke, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1933.

<sup>3</sup>Mims, p. 20.

<sup>4</sup>Mims, pp. 25-26; Starke, pp. 27-28; Warren, R. P., "The Blind Poet: Sidney Lanier," *Amer. Rev.* (Nov., 1933), II, p. 30.

case, somewhat Victorian, somewhat typically Southern and provincial, yet somewhat liberal and non-sectional also that Lanier drew his early ideas and ideals. What these were we shall attempt to discover from his literary works. For convenience, these may be divided roughly into two parts, those written while Lanier remained in and around Macon—from 1842 to 1872—and those written after he left Macon, from 1872 to 1881, the year of his death.

Of Sidney Lanier's works before the war, little or nothing is in print, and we are forced to judge of his early opinions relative to the South almost entirely by way of his slightly later ones. We know that at this period he was quite orthodox in his Presbyterian faith, though later he was to broaden. In his junior year at Oglethorpe College, we find such characteristic remarks as: "Liberty, Patriotism, and Civilization are on their knees before the men of the South, and with clasped hands and straining eyes are begging them to become Christians."

Graduating from Oglethorpe at the head of his class, Lanier was offered and accepted a tutorship in the university. This lasted but a year, to be interrupted by the outbreak of the war. His own state of mind at this time, and that of his fellows, he later described in *TIGER LILIES*, his only novel:

An afflatus of war was breathed upon us. Like a great wind, it drew and blew upon men, women, and children. Its sounds mingled with the solemnity of the church organs and arose with the earnest words of preachers praying for guidance in the matter. It sighed in the half-hearted words of sweet-hearts, conditioning lovers with war service. It thundered splendidly in the impassioned appeals of orators to the people. It whistled through the streets, it stole into the firesides, it clinked glasses in bar-rooms, it lifted the gray hairs of our wise men in their conventions, it thrilled through the lectures in college halls, it rustled the thumbled book-leaves of the school rooms.

Who could have resisted the fair anticipations which the new war idea brought. It arrayed the sanctity of a righteous cause in the brilliant trappings of military display. . . . It challenged the patriotism of the sober citizen while it in-

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\*Starke, p. 23.

fluenced the dream of the statesman. . . . It offered test to all allegiances and loyalties. . . .

If there was guilt in any, there was guilt in nigh all of us, between Maryland and Mexico. . . . Mr. Davis, if he be termed the ringleader of the rebellion, was so not by virtue of any instigation of his, but purely by the unanimous will and appointment of the Southern people.<sup>9</sup>

The description reminds one of Whitman's "Beat! Beat! Drums!" Writing in an unpublished essay on Devil's Bombshells, in 1867, Lanier states that every Southerner, young and old alike, believed that he could whip at least five Yankees, men, women, preachers, editors, all, making the claim. He continues:

Of course we laugh at it *now*—laugh in the hope that our neighbors will attribute the redness of our cheeks to that and not to shame. . . . The conceit of an individual is ridiculous because it is powerless. . . . The conceit of a whole people is terrible, it is a devil's bombshell, surcharged with death, plethoric with all foul despairs and disasters.<sup>7</sup>

Thus he spoke two years after he was released from the Union prison, and with the consequences of the war staring him in the face. "But during the war," to quote Professor Mims

there was but one idea in his mind, and that was that he might take part in the establishment of a Confederacy. He dreamed. . . of a nation that might be the embodiment of all that was fine in government and society.<sup>8</sup>

And we learn, from *TIGER LILIES*, something of the dream he had for the future of the Confederacy, that it was to become a seat of culture equalling anything the world had ever known, where music, and poetry, and literature should thrive, and that the South should be as the proverbial bit of yeast which should extend and elevate the rest of the continent. It was now that he was forming his conception of the South as heart in contrast to the North as head in a poetic figure which he develops through three poems as his outlook matures.

Lanier joined the Confederate forces in 1860, at the age of 18. He remained in active service throughout the war, and shortly

<sup>9</sup>*Tiger Lilies*, pp. 119-120.

<sup>7</sup>Starke, p. 43.

<sup>8</sup>Mims, p. 44.

before its close he was taken prisoner and incarcerated in a Union prison in Virginia, where he remained a year longer. It is probable that the hardships of these five years resulted in the breaking of his health; he all but died on the trip home on his release from Point Lookout Prison, and was ill for sometime thereafter. There are preserved several poems of the prison period and the period immediately following, but few which require our attention in seeking his political and economic ideas. There is almost an idea of defeat in some of his writings of this time—yet not defeat utterly. To a Northern friend, Northrup, he writes, in 1866:

I despair of giving you any idea of the mortal stagnation which paralyzes all business here. On our streets Monday is very like Sunday: they show no life, save late in the afternoon, when the girls come out, one by one, and shine and move, just as the stars do an hour later. I don't think there's a man in town who could be induced to go into his neighbors store and ask "How's trade?" for he would have to atone for such an insult with his life. Everything is dreamy and drowsy and drone-y. . . . Our whole world here yawns in a vast and sultry spell of laziness. . . .<sup>9</sup>

And again, a few years later, he wrote to Bayard Taylor with reference to those years: "Perhaps you know that with us of the younger generation of the South, since the war, pretty much of the whole of life has been not dying."<sup>10</sup> Lanier was later to attack savagely the ills of the industrial system and the system itself for harboring such ills; but with the whole of life consisting of 'not dying', and with Mondays as dead as Sundays, it does not appear to me that Lanier is inconsistent in the poem, "Tyranny", written in 1868. It is a short poem which is a lament of the situation above described. After describing it, he concludes the poem with these verses:

Ye silent Mills,  
Reject the bitter kindness of the moss.  
O Farms! protest if any tree emboss  
The barren hills.

Young Trade is dead,  
And swart Work sullen sits in the hillside fern,  
And folds his arms that find no bread to earn,  
And bows his head.

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<sup>9</sup>Letter of June 29, 1866.

<sup>10</sup>Quoted by Starke, p. 82.

Spring-germs, spring-germs,  
Albeit the towns have left you place to play,  
I charge you, sport not. Winter owns to-day,  
Stay: feed the worms.<sup>11</sup>

The lament here is that trade is dead. But this is the trade which gave life, and not the trade which later he condemns, the trade that killed. The poem, moreover, is not critical. It is a wail in the midst of desolation.

One poem, half of which was written in 1862, the other half in 1865, indicates, I believe, rather clearly the change in Lanier's attitude toward the North after the war, a broadening of outlook which must have occurred between those years of the beginning of the poem and its completion. Lanier had thrown himself wholeheartedly into the Southern cause in the war. And by 1862 perhaps premonitions of the outcome were already arriving. The title of the poem is "The Tournament". It consists of two jousts, the 'first' and the 'second', both of which employ the figure to which we have referred, that which represents the North as head and the South as heart, engaged in a conflict. After the setting, in which Head's cold disdain is emphasized and Heart's debonaire jollity is detailed, Joust the First concludes with this verse:

They charged, they struck; both fell, both bled.  
Brain rose again, ungloved,  
Heart dying, smiled and faintly said,  
"My love to my beloved!"

This first Joust was written at Camp French, Wilmington, N. C., in May, 1862, as I have said. The poem at the time must have been regarded as complete. Though there is no bitterness in this half, perhaps, yet there is a clear lack of sympathy with the heartless North. Lanier's horizon at this point, under stress of war, is local and sectional—patriotic. And he seems to see already the defeat of the South.

But with the completion of the war, enmity and bitterness were useless, the Agrarians to the contrary notwithstanding. And Lanier seems to have tried to remember living causes and to bury dead ones. From the other half of this poem alone, it seems to me, even had we not much more corroborative evidence, it be-

<sup>11</sup>All poetry quoted is taken from Lanier, *Poems* (ed. by his wife) Chas. Scribner's Sons: New York: 1913, unless otherwise specified.

comes obvious that Lanier's vision cleared with remarkable rapidity. For by 1865 his horizon had lifted and he felt that he had an additional word to add to the above poem, and so he wrote *Joust the Second* and made the two into one poem which he named "The Tournament". The second *Joust* opens with these verses:

A-many sweet eyes wept and wept,  
A-many bosoms heaved again;  
A-many dainty dead hopes slept  
With yonder Heart-knight prone o' the plain.

Yet stars will burn through any mists,  
And the ladies' eyes, through rains of fate,  
Still beamed upon the bloody lists,  
And lit the joust of Love and Hate.

Many hopes, he says, were dead with defeat. But anger and hate are not among the dead. Old loves maintain the bitterness of war. And he proceeds to plead, through suggestion, for an absolution of this hate and strife. A strange knight leaps down into the lists to fight with hate, the knight of Love. And hate vanishes at the encounter. The poem concludes with:

Then Love cried, "Break me his lance, each knight!  
Ye shall fight for blood-athirst Fame no more!"  
And the knights all doffed their mailed Might  
And dealt out dole on dole to the poor.

Then dove-flights sanctified the plain,  
And hawk and sparrow shared a nest.  
And the great sea opened and swallowed Pain,  
And out of this water-grave floated Rest!

This was written, I repeat, in 1865, Lanier then being twenty three years old. It is plain already, I believe, that Lanier's horizon was becoming something more than sectional.

Lanier came to rejoice in the overthrow of Slavery, having accepted the present and refusing to nurse the past. And he was already realizing, as he says, that it was the belief in the soundness and greatness of the American Union among the million of the North and of the great Northwest which really conquered the South. "As soon as we invaded the North," he continues, "and arrayed this sentiment against us, our swift destruction followed."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Mims, p. 45.



It is this belief in the soundness and greatness of the American Union which we identify, in this paper, with Nationalism. And the men who brand that spirit "Northern Sectionalism", and any Southern man of the Reconstruction who embraced it a traitor, as Mr. Ransom, Mr. Warren, and Mr. Tate do, are guilty, it seems to me, of a willful attempt to cloud the truth: men of the North had that spirit, true, as Lincoln witnesses. But men of the South had it too, as Lee and Lanier witness. Northern sectionalism was narrow and bitter, just as Southern sectionalism was, and just as any sectionalism is apt to be. But the spirit to which we refer was neither narrow nor bitter, was neither Northern sectionalism nor Southern sectionalism. It was Nationalism. This problem we shall have occasion to return to later.

### III

At this point it is convenient to consider specifically certain of the charges made against Lanier by three Southern Agrarians, Mr. J. C. Ransom, Mr. Allen Tate, and Mr. R. P. Warren. From the charges made by them I have selected in practically every case charges that seemed to be made in common by them all, and charges which are related to Lanier as a Southerner. One charge, as framed by Mr. Tate, runs thus: "[Lanier] believed that the searing blast of art should be tempered to the shorn and public lamb; that he must defer to the public taste consciously in order better at some time later to instruct it."<sup>33</sup> Or, as Mr. Ransom phrases it, "He came out of the war sickened bodily and mentally, and went dully into a succession of jobs and lean livelihood in conquered Georgia and Alabama. *His resistance was over.*"<sup>34</sup> The question to which they give an affirmative answer is, *Was Lanier's resistance over? Did he fail to speak out in protest against what he felt to be the evils of his time?*

Brushing aside for the moment the protests of the Lanier defenders, let us examine some of his own works of the postwar

<sup>33</sup>Tate, p. 70. The three essays by the Southern Agrarians on Lanier are: (1) "The Blind Poet: Sidney Lanier", by Robert Penn Warren in *American Review*, November 1933, pp. 27-45; (2) "Hearts and Heads", by John Crowe Ransom in *The American Review*, March 1934, pp. 554-571; and (3) "A Southern Romantic" by Allen Tate in *The New Republic*, August 30, 1933, pp. 67-70.

<sup>34</sup>Ransom, "Hearts and Heads", p. 556. The italics are mine.

period in Georgia. Of five addresses of the period which Lanier made, two are of interest to us here. In an address before the Furlow Masonic Female College of Americus, Georgia, on June 30, 1869, he states as his subject: "the present conditions and future prospect of some great departments of life in that peculiar portion of the United States which we inhabit", the South. Bright though future prospects might appear, he said, there was little cause for pride in her present condition, the blame for which could not be laid entirely to the recently ended war. The first question he considered was that of the growing emancipation of women. This he was opposed to, feeling that women would become degraded by entering into politics and government. But in urging women to reject female political suffrage, he was not urging them to reject female influence in politics. He says:

So far from that, you cannot if you would abandon that responsible attitude which in all ages and in all nations women have maintained towards the State. Consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, silently or loudly, you *must* be a political power.

Whether one agrees with him or not, can we at any rate deny that he was speaking out? Another question he moves on to consider is the heartening results of new agricultural efforts, which were everywhere to be seen, though only four years old, and which most minds of the South had formerly predicted would never return. "But," Lanier added:

as we felicitate ourselves upon them, let us not forget to accept and digest the lessons which they learn us. Let us not forget, for instance, to accept and digest the unpalatable truth that we, here in the South, are among the crudest theorists in the world. We put together too many unsubstantial hypotheses. Day after day our public journals are filled with letters whose conclusions rest neither on logic nor on fact. I fear we are inordinately fond of predicting, of supposing, of prophesying, in agricultural matters. Let us learn to delay our conclusions until we have gathered together many facts, until we have taken all large and many-sided views, and above all, until we have actually tried them by material weights and measures. [Experiment as much as you can. Try this and that fertilizer; plant an acre in this grain, an

acre in that cotton, an acre in the other vine. . .]" Do not announce your projects before they are born; do not bury them before they are dead. Think, labor, *wait*."

As Lanier had told them in opening his speech, that was criticism, and criticism which the South was not ready to hear. But Lanier went on:

I cannot leave this subject without referring, in sorrowful fashion, to a certain insidious evil, which, especially since the war, has been the very bane and poison of all our humble artistic endeavors here in the South. I mean the habit of inviting purchasers to buy artists' works, *simply* because they happen to be Southern artists. I mean the habit of regarding our literature as *Southern* literature, our poetry as *Southern* poetry, our pictures as *Southern* pictures. I mean the habit of glossing over intrinsic defects of artistic productions by appealing to the Southern sympathies of the artist's countrymen. . . . The basis of all of this is unsound, and if we erect any superstructure of art upon it, the whole building will inevitably topple into disgraceful ruin. For, the basis of it is hate, and art will have nothing to do with hate.<sup>17</sup>

In these quotations one might emphasize Lanier's plea for a diversified crop system, and his appeal to Southerners to forget, at least in their art, their sectional prejudices. This does not mean that he was opposed to local-color literature; for there is much of this in his own works, particularly in his dialect poems; and further he was among the first to discover and praise Joel Chandler Harris in his dialect work, as well as to encourage continuously several lesser authors in such work.

The other speech to be noticed was the "Confederate Memorial Address", delivered April 26, 1870, and printed the next day in the *Macon Daily Telegraph*. In tone, it is what one would expect to find on such an occasion. But there are remarks, and a plea, which not every Southerner of the time might yet have been broad enough to accept. There is a slight and quiet reference to Trade that fills modern life with such noise and confusion that there is no quiet in which to think and ponder and grow in wisdom. Let this occasion furnish that quiet. This part is somewhat remi-

<sup>16</sup>Starke, A. H., "The Agrarians Deny a Leader," *Amer. Rev.* (March, 1934), II, quoted at p. 544.

<sup>18</sup>Starke, *Biography*, p. 139.

<sup>17</sup>Mims, pp. 63-128, for this whole discussion.

iscent of Wordsworth's "The World is too Much With Us." As a result of this noise and confusion fostered by Trade, Lanier goes on to say:

Crudity, immaturity, unripeness, acidity, instability. . . characterize our laws, our literature, all our thought, our politics, our social life, our loves and hates, our self development.

And then there is the plea which leads Professor Mims to remark that "Lanier. . . represents the best attitude of mind that could be held by the most liberal of Southerners at that time."<sup>18</sup> Without rehearsal of buried issues, Lanier makes his appeal to the men and women of the South to rise to the plane of tranquility and magnanimity:

Who in all the world needs tranquility more than we? I know not a deeper question in our Southern life at this present time, than how we shall bear our load of wrong and injury with the calmness and tranquil dignity that become men and women who would be great in misfortune. . . Today we are here for Love and not for Hate. Today we are here for harmony and not for discord. Today we are risen immeasurably above all vengeance.<sup>19</sup>

It is in the face of this spirit of Lanier's that we must weigh the truth of such remarks as one of Mr. Ransom's to the effect that: "Nationalism had not begun to be one of the stereotyped liberal virtues in Lanier's South, and had no business being one."<sup>20</sup> If this is true, it must at least follow that another statement by this same critic is false. If Lanier was speaking such sentiment to an entirely hostile, because purely sectional, audience, it could not be true that his 'resistance was over'—that he was not speaking out.

Before turning to Lanier's poetry of this period in order to throw additional light on the question of whether or not he failed to speak out in protest against the evil of his times, let us consider an additional, though similar, charge of the Agrarian critics, and search for an answer to the two at once. Mr. Tate and Mr. Warren are agreed, Mr. Ransom here dissenting, that "Lanier's poetry

<sup>18</sup>Mims, p. 103.

<sup>19</sup>Starke, Biography, p. 142.

<sup>20</sup>Ransom, p. 558.

had little to say to his century in substance or technique." Disregarding technique as not related to our subject, our two questions become, did he speak out? and did he have in substance anything to say specifically to his generation? We have already reviewed his poems "Tyranny" and the "Tournament". And in the two addresses quoted from, the questions seem partially answered already. But let us examine three of his dialect poems of 1869 and 70, and a poem not in dialect written in 1871. The first, of 1869, is called "Thar's More In The Man Than Thar Is In The Land." It is a poem which recounts the tale of a man named Jones who lived in the rocky, red hills of a Georgia county by that same name. This Jones,

He swore that he'd leave them old red hills and stones,  
Fur he couldn't make nuthin' but yallerish cotton,  
And little o' *that*, and his fences was rotten,  
And what little corn he had, *hit* was boughten  
And dinged ef a livin' was in the land.

So he sold his land for a dollar and a half to a fellow named Brown, and hitched up his mules and moved West. And Brown moved into Jones' farm. We may notice in particular the following idea of crop-diversification, with its mention of corn and wheat instead of cotton:

But Brown moved out on the old Jones' farm,  
And he rolled up his breeches and bared his arm,  
And he picked al the rocks from off'n the groun'  
And he rooted it up and he plowed it down,  
Then he sowed his corn and his wheat in the land.

After five years, Jones returns, sans farm, sans wagon, sans mules, sans tents. Brown sees him leaning over the fence and asks him in and feeds him, and then

... looked at him sharp and riz and swore  
That, "whether man's land was rich or poor  
Thar was more in the *man* than thar was in the *land*."

This poem was printed in the *Georgia Daily* of 1869 and was obviously regarded, therefore, as educational matter. In another poem, "Jones's Private Argyment", of 1870, he writes:

That air same Jones, which lived in Jones  
He had this pint about him  
He'd swear with a hundred sighs and groans,  
That farmers *must* stop gittin' loans,  
An git along without 'em.

That bankers, warehousemen, and sich  
 Was fatt'nin' on the planter,  
 And Tennessy was rotten-rich  
 A-raisin' meat and corn, all which  
 Drew money to Atlanta:

And the only thing (says Jones) to do  
 Is, eat no meat that's boughten:  
*But tear up every I, O, U,  
 And plant all corn and swear for true  
 To quit a-raisin' cotton!*

The last three lines here Lanier has himself italicized. We may pause long enough to remark that one of the policies to which he was bitterly opposed was that of any permanent subsidization of the farmer. Continuing with the above poem, such resolutions to quit planting cotton and to diversify his crops, to quit selling his crop out through borrowed money before it was made, and so on, were the kinds of resolutions Jones made *publicly* where he could be heard. But one afternoon Jones had pulled his team up in the shade and sat talking to himself, reading a paper. And a farmer, hoeing in a nearby field, on drawing closer, heard him mutter these words:

And presently says he: "hit's true;  
 That Cisby's head is level.  
 Thar's one thing farmers all must do,  
 To keep themselves from goin' tew  
 Bankruptcy and the devil!

"More corn! more corn! *must* plant les ground,  
 And *mustn't* eat what's boughten!  
 Next year they'll do it: reasonin's sound:  
 (And cotton will fetch 'bout a dollar a pound),  
*Tharfore, I'll plant all cotton!"*

The moral there should be plain enough, and the purpose plainly one of propaganda. The third of these dialect poems, written the same year as the above, concerns a character by the name of Ellick Garry. An acquaintance of Ellick's overtook him one day as he sat beside his empty wagon in the sand. This acquaintance rather secretively slipped up behind him and overheard the predicament he was in. It seems that Ellick had given a lien against his crop to a firm of Pardman and Sharks, and perhaps to others, for a total of nine hundred odd dollars. Thinking, however, to get a better price elsewhere or to avoid paying the lien altogether, Ellick slyly takes his cotton to another firm by



the name of Jammel and Cones. But before he could receive a quotation on his cotton, Jammel and Cones swore out an affidavit against his load for the total amount of all his liens with the other dealers, which was nine hundred dollars. His cotton was sold for eight hundred, and Ellick had stopped on the way home to get his figures straight. He knew that he had nothing to show for his year's crop. But as he said,

... I can't make it gee, fur nine from eight  
Leaves nuthin'—and none to carry.

The intruder, who has overheard Ellick's predicament, speaks, and the last verse concludes:

Then I says "Hello, here, Garry!  
However you star' and frown  
Thar's somethin' fur yow to carry,  
Fur you've worked it upside down!"  
Then he riz and walked to his little bull-cart,  
And made like he neither had seen nor heerd  
Nor knowed that I knowed of his raskilly part,  
And he tried to look as if *he* wa'nt feared,  
And gathered his lines like he never keered,  
And he driv down the road 'bout a quarter or so,  
And then looked around, and I hollered, "Hello,  
Look here, Mister Ellick Garry!  
You may git up soon and lie down late,  
But you'll always find that nine from eight  
Leaves nuthin'—and none to carry."

Was Lanier speaking out; and did he have anything to say? We have indicated his enveighing against subsidation of the farmer, his condemnation of the short-sightedness of those farmers who selfishly refused to coöperate in an early form of land quota and so defeated all purposes at coöperation, his plea for magnanimity and for a burying of anachronistic sectional hate and prejudice, the beginnings of his attacks against Trade, his plea that the art of the South make its appeal on a basis of merit rather than on a basic of sectional emotionalism, his desire that women not enter politics and public offices but remain in the home, and his repeated espousal of the cause of subsistence farming, a farming in which the people would plant what they needed to live on rather than trusting all to the one uncertain money-crop of cotton.

While we are treating the subject of the diversification of crops, we may quote briefly from his remarks in an essay, "The New

South", a study which was not written, however, until later when Lanier had made his home in Baltimore. The New South, as distinct from the Old South, meant small farming, the development of which since the war, he says:

becomes the notable circumstance of the period.

Indeed one has only to recall how the connection between marriage and the price of corn is but a crude and partial statement of the intimate relations between politics, social life, morality, art, on the one hand, and the bread-giver earth on the other; one has only to remember that. . . whatever crop we hope to reap in the future—whether it be a crop of poems. . . of constitutional safeguards, of virtuous behaviors. . . we have to bring it out of the ground with palpable ploughs and with plain farmers forethought; in order to see that a vital revolution in the farming economy of the South. . . is the one substantial fact upon which a really New South can be predicted.<sup>21</sup>

This statement is plain and specific: "A vital revolution in the farming economy of the South is the one substantial fact upon which a really New South can be predicted". And today the statement, with its same application, is not out of date. I might add with reference to this essay that Lanier viewed with disfavor the large-scale farming of the West—industrialized farming—though he says that his fear was based on possibilities rather than actualities, for such farming was just then commencing. He viewed it with misgivings because "Large farming is not farming at all. It is mining for wheat."<sup>22</sup> Writing to his brother he had said a year before:

And thus, as I said, it really seems as if prosperity at the South must come long after your time and mine. Our people have failed to perceive the deeper movements underrunning the times; they lie wholly off, out of the stream of thought, and whirl their poor old dead leaves of recollection round and round, in a piteous eddy that has all the wear and tear of motion without any of the rewards of progress. By the best information I can get, the country is substantially poorer now than when the war closed, and Southern securities have become simply a catchword. The looseness of thought among our people, the unspeakable rascality of corporations like M— How long is it going to take us to remedy these things? What—

<sup>21</sup>Starke, "The Agararians Deny a Leader," pp. 545-46.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 546.

ever is to be done, you and I can do our part of it far better here than there."

This he writes from Baltimore.

Did Lanier have anything to say to the South? I hardly see how the Agrarians can deny it. For what Dr. William S. Knickerbocker of *THE SEWANEE REVIEW* says appears to me as primarily true:

[Lanier's] agrarian plea for the diversified small farm anticipated by fifty years the gospel of the Southern "Agrarians" of Nashville like Messrs. Ransom, Tate, Davidson, and Lytle. Though the "fire-eating" regionalism of *I'll Take My Stand* may not be found in the courteous but manly revolt of Lanier, the rest of the agrarian program may be found in his writings."

Mr. Ransom in some degree recognizes this. For he grants that Lanier's emphasis on the planting of corn in addition to cotton would in those times have been sympathized with by the Agrarians. And he adds that "at least once, and perhaps we might say occasionally, he put with the idea of corn the idea of subsistence farming, and there we have agrarianism beyond a doubt, perhaps in its most pointed essence. Mr. Tate and Mr. Warren should not have overlooked this."<sup>2</sup> There seems to be some confusion in the ranks. One might remark that Mr. Ransom should also have known Lanier better and hence should not have overlooked the fact that Lanier not once or occasionally but persistently advocated the idea of subsistence farming.

#### IV

Returning briefly to Lanier's poems, the last one of the Macon period, containing thirty stanzas, was published in 1871 in a magazine which was devoted to vital problems and interests of the State of Georgia and of the South, *The Southern Farm and Home*. The fact that it occurred in such a magazine, and that it dealt with an agricultural subject, is indicative that Lanier was publishing it as timely educational material for immediate consumption, suggests that he was making a practical appeal and a contribution

<sup>1</sup>Mims, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup>Starke, "The Agrarians Deny a Leader," p. 550.

<sup>3</sup>Ransom, p. 568.

in substance. The poem does not occur in any collected edition of his poetry, but may be found at page 151 ff. of Mr. Stark's *Biography*. The title is, significantly enough, "The Homestead". I quote several characteristic verses.

The State spread out her arms and said  
My children, Hate today is dead,  
And Love and Law together wed,  
Sit on the hills to rule you.

I will that they with equal reign  
Shall keep your weal, and clear the stain  
Red war hath left on my domain,  
And strengthen you and school you.

I will no man shall homeless be,  
I will no weeping wife shall flee  
From shadow of her own roof-tree  
Forth driven by hard neighbor.

Within the body of the poem, according to Starke, who does not quote that portion of the poem, there are instructions for planting various fruits, vines, grains, and vegetables, in addition to the corn he has already been urging, an idea the significance of which seems not even today to have penetrated the agricultural South. And yet a further idea of subsistence farming, one which is just getting under strong way in Lanier's state of Georgia, is that of live stock and poultry interests in addition to variegated crops. And Lanier, having made his suggestions, concludes (the quotations again being somewhat scattered):

Aye, gleam my hills and fecund plains  
With wheat spears and tall soldier-grains  
Whose surried stateliness constrains  
The hunger-tyrant's pleasure  
• • • • •

From my home-guard let cheery cries  
Of homely cattle upward rise  
What time the cock salutes the skies  
With heartsome bold good-morrow.  
• • • • •

Then shall my homestead light the land  
With gem-rays warm on every hand  
Like red heart rubies in the sand  
Of a fair country lying

Whatever the poetic merits of the piece—and as it appeared in the *Southern Farm and Home* it is not likely that Lanier regarded

<sup>20</sup>Starke, *Biography*, p. 151 ff.

it primarily for its poetic value: indeed, this should be said for most of the poems we are studying—there are definite practical contributions in it. I have suggested that it is not just to demand of a poet that he deal entirely with practical and local affairs, for propaganda is seldom the stuff from which good poetry is made; and Lanier's poetic reputation would be little if any if it had to depend on the selections to which our purpose confines us. Yet when we consider that Lanier published less than seventy poems during his entire life, and that this Macon period is a comparatively unproductive one, and that, nevertheless, such a proportion as I have noted involved immediate practical concerns, I believe we cannot but conclude that Lanier should at least be entitled to be regarded as a man critically interested in the problems of life around him, and as a man who expressed that interest.

Two other works of the Macon period should be mentioned before we leave this early stage of his writing. They are "The Jaquerie", and "Retrospects", the former a long poem, the latter an essay.

"The Jaquerie", a fragment, was begun possibly as early as 1862, and added to as late as 1868, but never completed. The theme was to be the relation of trade to Chivalry and unrest, though it likely began in Lanier's interest in the literature of medieval times. The following quotation refers to the killing of Chivalry by Trade, though the scene is begun

Ere yet young Trade was 'ware of his big thews  
Or dreamed that in the bolder after days  
He would hew down and bind old Chivalry  
And drag him to the highest height of fame  
And plunge him in the sea of still Romance.

The other quotation is a reference to the peasant uprising in France, a revolt, Lanier believed, of the poor against the evil consequences of the spirit of Trade. The quotation is in the form of a song, the 'hound', of course, representing the peasants, while the hound's 'Master' represents the spirit of Trade. Having received very abusive treatment,

The hound into his kennel crept;  
He rarely wept, he never slept.  
His mouth he always open kept,  
Licking his bitter wound. . . .

And as the hound lay there looking at a meat-bare bone in the moonlight, he addresses it and says:

An thou wert Master, I had slit  
Thy throat with a huge wound.

Maltreatment has produced anger, anger has produced the idea, and now the idea produces the act, and the last verse depicts the rising up of the peasant-hound of France:

The star in a castle-window shone,  
The master lay abed, alone.  
Oh ho, why not? quo' the hound.  
He leapt, he seized the throat, he tore  
The Master, head from neck, to floor,  
And rolled the head i' the kennel door,  
And fled and salved his wound. . . .

In the two quotations Lanier has said that it was the evils resulting from early Trade that had killed Chivalry and had pinched the peasants into revolt.

Of his essay, "Retrospects", written in 1867, and published in the *Southern Magazine* of Baltimore in 1871, the central and major part "is given to a discussion of music, which, as in *TIGER LILIES*, Lanier exalts as the great modern art, the art that he expected to usher in the spiritual renaissance that seemed to him inevitable."<sup>77</sup> This was at a time when orchestra music was not receiving the loud acclaim in this country which it now enjoys. The essay ends with a discussion of the contemporary social situation, not only in America but in the world generally. It is, however, in the direction of ideas already presented, but very vague in its applications. There is one idea which perhaps should be elaborated since it will recur later: that is his idea of what he called the process of "Etherialization", which he felt applied to politics, economics, the material world—in short he held it to be a principle of life. The process was one by which the personality of the race, so to speak, evolved toward higher and higher refinement, and by which politics and economics, and all phenomena of social life, did likewise. In its application to the material world, Lanier saw it at work through such scientific discoveries as photography, phonography, and so on, the "etherialization" of art. In his contention of the evolution of the racial intellect, he seems

<sup>77</sup>Starke, Biography, p. 130.



to be at one with Coleridge, if I understand either one of them correctly. For in his criticism of Shakespeare, Coleridge had said that Shakespeare's art was superior to the art of the Greeks because it appealed to the higher stage of Reason whereas the Greeks had appealed mainly to the intermediate stage of Understanding. These stages, as I understand it, were stages in the development of the social mind, or represented such. But Lanier adds to the process the factors which operate the process, the prime one being music, which was itself "love in search of a word". The whole discussion is rather 'etherialized' and Lanier, realizing this vagueness, practically apologizes near the close, but feels justified:

if my words convey any trace of those ideas which are so intangible that they cannot be directly imparted but only chance-awakened by some happy suggestion.

*[to be continued in next issue]*

by George Shelton Hubbell

## TRIPLE ALICE

ALICE Pleasance Liddell was born on May 24, 1852, while her scholarly father was headmaster of Westminster School. In 1855 her father was made Dean of Christ Church College, Oxford, and she came to Oxford at the age of four.<sup>1</sup> There, hardly more than a baby, she became a favorite companion of the young, distinguished professor Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, an able mathematician not yet known as Lewis Carroll, and in his mind she finally precipitated the remarkable tale later to be entitled *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. She was the "original Alice". There is also, to be sure, the "ideal Alice" of the story, who, being a creature of the author's fancy, differs in some respects from the actual child. And finally there is, for many readers, a third Alice, whom Sir John Tenniel drew, the likeness of another little girl, for his famous illustrations.<sup>2</sup> Can we form a rationale of these three Alices, explain them, harmonize them? Some writers have made much of the dual personality which enabled the Reverend

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<sup>1</sup>Her father was George Henry Liddell (1811-1898), Dean of Christ Church College for thirty-six years (1855-1891), and famous to students of Greek as co-editor of Liddell and Scott's *GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON* (1843). Dean Liddell had four daughters and three sons, but one girl, Rhoda, was too young for the *Wonderland* adventure, and the boys would not have counted anyhow, for Lewis Carroll did not find boys congenial. The best account of Dean Liddell is H. L. Thompson's *MEMOIR OF H. G. LIDDELL, D.D.* (1899). Thompson also wrote the article on Liddell for the *DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY*. There is a portrait of Dean Liddell in S. D. Collingwood's *THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF LEWIS CARROLL*, p. 213. At the time of Alice's death in 1934 only three members of her father's family survived: Rhoda, the younger sister, at whose home in Westerham in Kent Alice died; Sir Frederick, legal adviser to the speaker of the House of Commons; and Lionel, living in Dinard on the French coast.

<sup>2</sup>His model was not Alice Liddell, but a younger girl named Mary Hilton Badcock. See Williams and Madan, *A HANDBOOK OF THE LITERATURE OF THE REV. C. L. DODGSON*, p. 22, for a portrait and account of Mary Badcock. She was daughter of Canon Badcock of Ripon. Smaller than Alice Liddell and less piquant, she had "bright golden hair" combed straight back in the manner made familiar by the Tenniel drawings. Dodgson was struck by seeing her photograph, and recommended her to Tenniel as a model. The artist visited her, but worked largely from photographs. He did not like to draw from models.

Professor Dodgson, normally a severe scholar, to assume the rôle of Lewis Carroll, sprightly friend of little girls. The triple personality of his Alice, as it comes complexly to a reader, is also of great interest.

## I

First we must look carefully at the "real Alice", for she it was whom Lewis Carroll set out to portray, and his literary replica of her is in many respects not unrealistic. Alice Liddell was ten in 1862, when the story of her "adventures" was conceived as a book. She lived in the northeast angle of "Tom Quad", and her professorial chum lived in the northwest angle. She and her two sisters always wore cotton dresses, just alike and quite as full as the dresses in the Tenniel illustrations.<sup>3</sup> Her dark hair was bobbed so as to come a little below her ears, and she wore bangs like many little girls of to-day. That she was pretty and graceful many of Lewis Carroll's camera studies of her attest. Belle Moses has vividly described some of those photographs.

One, as a beggar child, has become quite famous. She is pictured standing, with her ragged dress slipping from her shoulders and her right hand held as if begging for pennies; the other hand rests upon her hip, and her head is bent in a meek fashion; but the mouth has a roguish curve, and there is just the shadow of a laugh in the dark eyes, for of course it's only 'make believe', and no one knows it better than Alice herself.<sup>4</sup>

All three of the sisters were pretty. Alice was the middle one, and in some respects the others were both prettier than she, but she had a lively charm and an imaginative expression that may account for Lewis Carroll's preference. Miss Moses remarks this in a group portrait of the three.

He took another picture of the children perched upon a sofa: Lorina in the center, a little sister nestling close to her on either side, making a pretty pyramid of the three dark

<sup>3</sup>Yet Lewis Carroll wrote to Tenniel, "Don't give Alice so much crinoline." Stuart Collingwood, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

<sup>4</sup>Belle Moses, *LEWIS CARROLL IN WONDERLAND AND AT HOME*, p. 87. Lewis Carroll, who liked child actors, often posed the children so as to suggest a fictitious situation or story. This picture is reproduced in Collingwood, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

heads. Yet in studying the faces one can understand why it was Alice who inspired him. . . Alice, with the elf-locks and the straight heavy 'bang', is looking far away with those wonderful eyes of hers. . . If it hadn't been for Alice there would have been no Wonderland.\*

And Alice's pensive, far-away look in this picture may well indicate that her thoughts were indeed in Wonderland, for we learn that Lewis Carroll generally told the children stories to put them in the mood for having portraits taken.\*

In a third picture, elaborately posed by their gifted friend, Alice is seated on a table, probably in his study.<sup>7</sup> She holds a bunch of dark grapes on a dish in her lap. Lorina stands back of her, holding a few grapes just above the reach of Edith, who seems trying to get them. Lorina and Edith really appear interested in the little affair of the grapes, but Alice has a rapt, inner look which may be a result of the recent story. All three wear voluminous white striped frocks which make their goodly childish legs seem puny, unlike the perhaps too mature rounding of Alice's legs in the Tenniel drawings. And though Alice shows something of the Tenniel grace, in the photograph it seems more natural, not so suggestive of dancing school.\*

Such was the child for whom and about whom the Alice books were written. In 1862, at the age of ten, and looking probably very much as she appears in these portraits, she went on a customary boat trip up the Thames from Oxford to Godstow with her two sisters, Professor Dodgson, and a certain Professor Duckworth. On that trip Dodgson so moved her with his tales and jingles that she drew from him the rash promise to write the book of *Alice's Adventures Underground*, as he called it then. One account of the trip is preserved in the well-known prefatory poem beginning, "All in the golden afternoon". There Lorina is represented as Prima, Alice as Secunda, and Edith as Tertia. Secunda, or Alice, it is significant to note, was the one who asked for nonsense in the story. The tale had come out painfully, sub-

\*Moses, op. cit., pp. 87-88. The picture is in Collingwood, op. cit., p. 94.

<sup>7</sup>Caryl Hargreaves, "Lewis Carroll As Recalled by Alice", *New York Times*, May 1, 1932, sec. 6, p. 7. Caryl Hargreaves is the son of Alice.

<sup>8</sup>There is a photograph of this famous study in Collingwood, op. cit., p. 134.

<sup>9</sup>This picture is reproduced in the *New York Times*, May 1, 1932, sec. 5, p. 7.

ject to interruptions by Tertia "not *more* than once a minute". Episodes had been produced on former trips. Verses and drawings had been added in the professor's study, in the boat, beneath a hayrick in a field. Sometimes, Alice wrote afterwards, "Mr. Dodgson, in the middle of telling a thrilling adventure, would pretend to go fast asleep, to our great dismay." But after that particular trip of July 4, Alice most persistently teased her friend later in his rooms, till he agreed to write the stories down, as he recorded for the day in his journal.<sup>9</sup> "I wonder how many stories the world has missed," she reflected long afterwards, "because he never wrote anything down until I teased him into doing it."<sup>10</sup> And Lewis Carroll himself confided to her in 1883, when she was a grown woman, that without her "infant patronage I might never have written at all."<sup>11</sup>

One can hardly overrate the importance of Alice Liddell in the making of the books named for her. It is not simply that the heroine is Lewis Carroll's conscientious representation of her, bearing her name. Her part in the work is still more fundamental. He considered eight or nine possible titles for the story, but each

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<sup>9</sup>Quoted in Collingwood, *op. cit.*, p. 96. Apparently these river trips were frequent, habitual summer occurrences. At these times, Lewis Carroll always relaxed from his customary dignity by wearing white flannel trousers and a hard straw hat. As for the figure cut by Alice herself, one gets a lively idea of it in the passage about Alice rowing with the sheep in *THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS*. It was Professor Dodgson who taught the real Alice how to row. The same five usually went along. Once, Alice recalled later, two of Dodgson's sisters (then in their twenties) went with them, somewhat awing the children, precluding the customary stories and tea. The tea was a definite attraction for the Liddells, who had no afternoon refreshments at home at that period. This fact may have suggested the idea of the mad tea party. It may be significant that "Beautiful Soup" was Alice's favorite of the poems. Alice was not the only one of the group to get into the story as a character. Lorina was the Lory, Edith the Eaglet, Professor Duckworth the Duck, and Dodgson the Dodo. See Caryl Hargreaves, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>10</sup>See Collingwood, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>11</sup>Quoted in *The Literary Digest*, vol. 113, May 21, 1932, p. 16.

<sup>12</sup>Quoted by Carl Hargreaves, *op. cit.*, p. 15. Alice believed there were about two years of stories before he began the book. The impromptu drawings which generally accompanied the tales were all consigned to the waste basket. Many of his early letters and notes were likewise thrown away. Any one of them would now be very valuable.



<sup>17</sup>See Caryl Hargreaves, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

genial friends, away from the restraints of an adultish university, showed little sign of manners or primness. The imperious edict to begin the story, the rude and frequent interruptions, the alert and saucy quip that "it is next time",<sup>18</sup> seem unbelievable and humanly childish enough to satisfy Mr. Chesterton, or any one. Indeed this passage and Alice's persistent and successful campaign of teasing for the written story, suggest that Lewis Carroll knew whereof he spoke when he said that his heroine was "always ready for a little argument".<sup>19</sup>

On the other hand, Alice Liddell seems to have been an imaginative, thoughtful, affectionate little girl. Invariable indications of this appear in the pictures which Lewis Carroll took of the three sisters. Secunda, it will be remembered, spoke "in gentler tones".<sup>20</sup> That she responded to the affection of her kind friend with more than a mere childish thirst for stories may be indicated by the fact that she never forgot his failure to call upon her while she lay for six weeks with a broken leg.<sup>21</sup> She was apparently fond of animals, especially of her cat Dinah, which the librarian at the college recollects having often chased from the library.<sup>22</sup> It is interesting that the Cheshire Cat was her favorite character in the Alice books.<sup>23</sup> In fact, the little we know or can infer regarding her character seems to accord with Adler's theory of the in-between child in a family, while Lorina's imperious, edict-giv-

<sup>18</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 14.

<sup>19</sup>*Looking-Glass*, p. 250.

<sup>20</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 13.

<sup>21</sup>In fact, though he sent many letters (now lost) to the children at the deanery, he seldom came there. See Caryl Hargreaves, *op. cit.*, p. 7. There may have been some tension between him and their father. Dodgson was loyal to Dean Liddell through several conspicuous academic rows which troubled that executive's long and turbulent regime, but the younger man often showed a liberal tendency to side with the students. See Williams and Madan, *op. cit.*, p. xiii. It is probable also that he cared little for parents as a class, particularly for male parents. Since his freedom to associate with the children depended upon parental consent, he naturally could not very well express such a feeling, but the icy silence or dry brevity regarding parents in all his letters to children seems significant. In one of his prefaces he criticizes the parental management of children in church. See Williams and Madan, *op. cit.*, p. 217. In his many contacts with children he seems always to have propitiated the parents with meticulous politeness, but he rigidly excluded them from the fun. Doubtless he felt the need of removing those barriers which ordinary adults impose between the generations.

<sup>22</sup>Letter to the *New York Times*, May 8, 1932, sec. 3, p. 2, col. 4, by Francis Burke Brandt.

<sup>23</sup>*New York Times*, April 29, 1932, p. 19, col. 7.

ing tendency and Edith's irresponsible interruptions fit the same general family pattern.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup>See Alfred Adler, "The Child's Position in the Family", in *THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN*, pp. 137-164. The later life of Alice has but doubtful bearing upon her character as a child. Both Lorina and Alice married, but Edith lived on with their father, and died at Oxford, where she was buried at Christ Church College. A memorial window by Burne-Jones was dedicated to her there. Later their father was buried near her. Lorina became Mrs. Skene. Alice married Reginald Gervis Hargreaves (1852-1926), a typical country gentleman, product of Eton and Christ Church College, Oxford. He was a good shot, a fisherman and cricketer, a widely read man of culture, especially in French. On his estate, called Cufnells, near Lyndhurst in New Forest about eighty miles from London, he cultivated a great variety of trees, including redwoods and Douglas pines. Here Alice lived for over forty years and reared her three sons, two of whom, both captains, were killed in the World War. Her surviving son, Captain Caryl Hargreaves, who served through the war in the the Scotts Guards, later came with her to America in 1932. At the birth of her first son, Lewis Carroll wrote to her under the impression that the baby was a girl and would be named Alice. When she asked him to be godfather to her son, he characteristically failed to reply. (See Caryl Hargreaves, *op. cit.*, p. 7.) In 1891 he invited her and her husband to tea at Christ Church College. That was the last time he saw her. He died in 1898. (*Ibid.*, p. 15.) Her home by the ancient New Forest, on a low hilltop remote from the world, was a very peaceful retreat, among rhododendrons, with a black cat, perhaps some descendant of Dinah, to sleep by the door. Among many pictures hung in the rooms of her house, a visitor in 1932 saw none of Lewis Carroll or of any subject connected with the Alice books. (See Clair Price, "Alice Lives: in Wonderland and in Fact", *New York Times*, Jan. 24, 1932, sec. 5, p. 3.) Her husband died in 1926, leaving property valued at £23,913, but with accumulating expenses in 1928 she felt obliged to offer her original manuscript of *Alice's Adventures Underground* for sale. It brought £15,400 or \$75,259, the highest price any book had ever brought in an English auction room. A little later it was resold with some first editions for \$150,000. (See *New York Times*, Jan. 24, 1932, sec. 5, p. 23; *London Times*, Sept. 3, 1926, p. 13, col. 4; also Williams and Madan, *op. cit.*, p. 111.) The Bible and Shakespeare are the only books that have ever rivaled these prices. In 1932 the centenary of Lewis Carroll's birth was celebrated in England and in America. Alice was then (May 24) eighty years old, but she took part in the observances in both countries, and a good deal was written about her. She autographed a copy of *Alice in Wonderland* for the Princess Elizabeth, the only copy she is known to have signed, though Lewis Carroll signed a great many for his child friends, including children of the royal family. On May 2 she was made a Doctor of Letters at Columbia University, with much publicity. She was feeble, and the trip was exhausting, but on several occasions she spoke fittingly concerning her connection with the famous book. Her son often spoke for her in interviews. But there was something hollow about the whole celebration, for every one realized that any actual child in the audience was now more truly the "real Alice" than this amiable old lady whose great fortune it had once been to inspire the story. (See I. Daly, "The Original Alice", *Bookman*, vol. 75, pp. 164-167, May, 1932.) She was described at this time as an elderly gray-haired lady of medium height, with charming old-fashioned manners, who spoke in low tones, displayed a quaint sense of humor, and walked with two canes. (For portraits of her at this age, see *New York Times*, April 30, 1932, p. 17, col. 2; Nov. 17, 1934, p. 15, col. 2.) She died two years later, Nov. 15, 1934, aged eighty-two, at the home of her younger sister Rhoda, The Breaches,

## II

When we turn from the "real Alice" of the story to the "ideal Alice", we notice immediately several conspicuous but superficial differences. (1) To begin with, there was her age. The imaginary Alice is seven in the first tale. *Through the Looking-Glass* finds her seven and a half, for that story is supposed to occur in the following winter, with an indoor setting in contrast with the sunny afternoon in the open which had introduced her to the rabbit hole. Of course Alice Liddell was ten when the stories began to be set down in writing, and when *Through the Looking-Glass* was published, she was nineteen, but she had probably been about seven when he first began telling the stories. Though he obviously preferred seven as her age for purposes of the book, one can't help suspecting that the account he gives of her mental and emotional states is really taken from the ten-year-old level. She seems a little precocious for seven. (2) Another difference is her hair, which the pictures, including those that Lewis Carroll himself drew for *Alice's Adventures Underground*, all represent as longer than that of Alice Liddell, and not worn with bangs, but combed straight back.<sup>25</sup> Carroll's own drawings give her a part in the middle, such as may be seen in his photographs of Lorina's curls,<sup>26</sup> but Tenniel drew the straight hair without any part. (3) It is noteworthy also that Lorina and Edith are excluded from the

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Westerham Green, where she had lived for some time. The funeral was held there in a room hung with Tenniel drawings. She was buried at Lyndhurst near the home where she had spent most of her life.

<sup>25</sup>I can't explain why Lewis Carroll made this change. Were the bangs harder for him to draw? Did he disapprove his favorite's hair-do? Did he feel that it would be regarded with disfavor by others? Did he think that a "child of the pure unclouded brow" should not have the brow hidden beneath a fringe of straight hair? Did Alice herself suggest the change? It may be worth noting that, though Tenniel's drawings invariably show Alice's hair in good order, the text remarks that she often gave a "queer toss of her head to keep back the wandering hair that would always get into her eyes." (*Wonderland*, p. 131). In the *Looking-Glass* illustrations she has a comb to preserve an even more exact coiffure (Mary Badcock, Tenniel's child model, wore such a comb, as shown in the portrait published in Williams and Madan, op. cit., p. 22), but the text makes the Tiger-lily complain that her petals do not curl up more. (*Looking-Glass*, p. 158.) The Hatter, with professional eye, remarks that her hair wanted cutting. (*Wonderland*, p. 75.) It is possible that this matter of the straight, unruly hair was a sore point with Alice Liddell, who had two sisters with curls; and even the "ideal Alice" seems to have envied one Ada her ringlets. (*Wonderland*, p. 29.) Such feelings may have contributed to her somewhat introvert habit of reverie and her tendency to self-distrust.

<sup>26</sup>Collingwood, op. cit., pp. 94, 358.

story, save in their minor rôles as the Lory and the Eaglet, while the imaginary Alice is supplied with a new, rather vague family. Why is this? Three heroines would probably have been easier to manage than one. Alice, with two companions, would not have been obliged to talk so much to herself. And though they would not all have dreamed the same dream, they could all have been in Alice's dream. Of course the others would have enjoyed being included. But Lewis Carroll apparently wanted Alice alone. It was she, not the others, who had stirred his imagination. For her also he wrote out the story. Unscrupulously he picked his favorite, as no shrewd parent or teacher would dare to do. It is only bachelors, and similar unattached, non-responsible people who may do that with children. Carroll did it regularly, excluding boys, excluding adults, excluding or omitting various children according to their appeal for him. Then too, Alice herself, an introvert in an ever-present family, probably wished to be alone in the dream with the creatures she met there, though she does, in the first unfamiliar experience of that loneliness, "wish they *would* put their hands down. I am so *very* tired of being all alone here."<sup>1</sup> However, she soon got over the worst of such feelings and learned self-reliance as she came to understand her own resources and the emptiness of the imposing bluff in the strange beings whom she met. Also, it is likely that Lewis Carroll wished to have her alone in this world he had made for her. Though he would not have admitted it, perhaps, even to himself, he was probably irked with the necessity of including the other children and the faithful Duckworth on all the excursions with Alice. To a considerable extent, they were the liabilities of his delightful outings, bringing necessary but regrettable irrelevancies, imperious, peremptory, intrusive. As for the absent, vague family of the ideal Alice, the parents were coldly, firmly excluded, according to the method ordinarily adopted by Lewis Carroll with real parents in his letters to their children. Though implied in her dream, these fictitious parents were not seen or heard or thought of. One gathers that he agreed with Samuel Butler in wishing fathers and mothers could pass out of the picture as soon as their children were born. The imaginary sister, who does appear in

<sup>1</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 30.



the story, is considerably older than Alice. This seniority enables her to be less competitive and bossy than the actual Lorina, less adultishly remote than a mother. Lewis Carroll uses her to give a sympathetic view of Alice herself, with the "bright eager eyes" and "the little toss of her head", something that the conditions of the story severely excluded elsewhere.<sup>28</sup> Perhaps it is just as well that there could not be more of this kind of thing. The sister also served, but not particularly well, to give a summary recapitulation of Alice's first dream. The hint in *Through the Looking-Glass* that the sister was more literal, less imaginative than Alice may have been suggested by a characteristic of Lorina.<sup>29</sup> The one other member of this imaginary family to be mentioned is a brother, said to have a Latin grammar. It was probably the grammar that dragged this boy into the story at all. Only in *Sylvie and Bruno* did Lewis Carroll deign to make full recognition that boys exist, by giving one a real part to play.

But aside from these rather unimportant differences, the imaginary Alice seems the result of a careful attempt to create a faithful replica of the original. Probably such realistic objectivity does more than anything else to distinguish this heroine beyond the other thousands of child characters in literature. For the author was not content to give a superficial, external, or passive likeness of his beloved young friend. He explored her mind, her temperament, her faults, her idiosyncrasies, with the probing thoroughness of a lover to whom every detail is precious; and he gave her in action. True, as a thoroughgoing Victorian, he refrained from any of the countless subjects unmentionable among children of the most genteel contemporary families. That is a very considerable reservation, and some day it may date the stories more damagingly than it does now; but as yet we have not, so far as children's books are concerned, appreciably relinquished

<sup>28</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 130. The conditions of the story should have excluded such references as those to the "little sleeves", "little arms", and, again, "bright eager eyes" in the well-known rowing scene with the sheep (*Looking-Glass*, p. 204), but when one remembers that this breach of good technique probably indicates the author's powerful memory of just such an episode, in which he himself had the position of the sheep, one loses any inclination to cavil.

<sup>29</sup>*Looking-Glass*, p. 145. The contrast between quick imagination and plodding literalness is a characteristic device for Lewis Carroll's humor. Probably many who thought that as a professor he was dry and humorlessly literal may simply have failed to catch the humor behind his expressions.

the Victorian reticences. Perhaps this conservative trait has made books for children seem more childish to-day than they used to seem, in the days when books for adults were almost equally squeamish.

In as far as realism concerns the external details of life, we learn a great deal about this imaginary Alice. In her pocket (duly shown in some of the illustrations<sup>30</sup>) she carried comfits, a thimble,<sup>31</sup> and, later on, a memorandum book.<sup>32</sup> She sometimes made daisy chains,<sup>33</sup> played croquet,<sup>34</sup> or chess.<sup>35</sup> She was sometimes punished for faults which she acknowledged having committed.<sup>36</sup> She knew how to row, but frequently "caught crabs".<sup>37</sup> There was an old nurse who called her when it was time to take a walk;<sup>38</sup> and this nurse she had once frightened by pretending "that I'm a hungry hyaena, and you're a bone".<sup>39</sup> She had a governess for lessons,<sup>40</sup> which came at nine a. m. At one-thirty p. m. she generally had dinner.<sup>41</sup> She apparently liked orange marmalade,<sup>42</sup> but in general didn't care for jam, at any rate, not *to-day*.<sup>43</sup> She had at one time attended a day school where French and music were extras.<sup>44</sup> She was thoroughly familiar with the use of slates.<sup>45</sup>

Such were her important little tastes, experiences, habits: the stuff of which child character, adult character, and world destiny are made. Also regarding her temperament and personality much is told. "I wish I could tell you half the things Alice used to say, beginning with her favorite phrase 'Let's pretend.'"<sup>46</sup> She often talked to herself, even scolded herself to tears, tried to box her

<sup>30</sup>See *Wonderland*, p. 21. Lewis Carroll's own pockets must have served much of the time as a kind of supplement for those of the little girls he knew or might happen to meet. See Collingwood, *op. cit.*, pp. 369 ff.

<sup>31</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 38.

<sup>32</sup>*Looking-Glass*, p. 213.

<sup>33</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 17.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>35</sup>*Looking-Glass*, pp. 144-146. Apparently she *liked* to play chess.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 198.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 203. See illustration, p. 206.

<sup>38</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 43.

<sup>39</sup>*Looking-Glass*, p. 145.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>41</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 78.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>43</sup>*Looking-Glass*, pp. 196-197.

<sup>44</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 103.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 115.

<sup>46</sup>*Looking-Glass*, p. 145.

own ears, pretended to be two people, and cheated herself at croquet;<sup>47</sup> or she talked to her kittens,<sup>48</sup> even contemplated a conversation with her own feet.<sup>49</sup> In short, she was imaginative, "a very thoughtful little girl",<sup>50</sup> a dreamer who had a certain faith in her dreams, a faith which Lewis Carroll is willing to encourage on philosophic grounds. "Life, what is it but a dream?"<sup>51</sup> The question as to whether Alice or the Red King did the dreaming<sup>52</sup> is especially philosophic, suggesting that this "ideal Alice" is only a dream in the mind of the author, and, more remotely still, that we are all dreams in the mind of God. With all her fondness for dreams, Alice did not like the idea of *being* one. Yet we suspect that her dreaminess was ingrained enough to have got her regarded askance in our American educational system. Was she an introverted escapist, dodging the real problems of life by resort to a private world? One must admit that, to a certain extent, she was. The fact that the story makes her a lonely child surrounded by grown-ups strengthens this conclusion. Yet though the real Alice Liddell was environed by sisters near her own age, she too, it seems, was given to this sort of escape. In the picture, for example, which shows her sisters interested in getting some grapes, she sits apparently lost in thought, with the grapes unregarded on her lap. The deep retirement of her whole mature life suggests that she made no great effort to throw herself into the stream of human intercourse, and when she at length was brought to America, she said that this trans-Atlantic material, external world became to her a present Wonderland.<sup>53</sup> Was she justified in assuming such retirement, or did it harm and defeat her? Who can say? Let those who know both New York City and the Alice books choose their own Wonderland.

Harry Morgan Ayres suggests that this unabashed preference for or tolerance of a dream world is medieval.<sup>54</sup> Lewis Carroll

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., pp. 24, 27.

<sup>48</sup>Looking-Glass, p. 143.

<sup>49</sup>Wonderland, pp. 26-27.

<sup>50</sup>Looking-Glass, p. 188.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 272.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., pp. 188-189; 271.

<sup>53</sup>New York Times, May 1, 1932, sec. 5, p. 7.

<sup>54</sup>"Lewis Carroll and the 'Alice' Books", COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY QUARTERLY, vol. 24, pp. 158-177 (June, 1932). The logic, the piety, the bestiary of strange creatures, the moral considerations as in an animal fable, the moralizing of

is in a way comparable with the *Pearl* poet or with Dante, especially with Dante, who also immortalized his beloved by making her the ideal experimenter of enlightenment regarding the fantastic material world as he understood it. Dante expressed no doubt, however, that the ideal Beatrice was right, real, and permanent, whereas the world she left behind was a nightmare, repudiated and foredoomed. The modern dream is less dogmatic. Maybe Alice is the "fabulous monster",<sup>28</sup> whereas the arbitrary creatures she met are real. Perhaps she is their dream. At any rate, the New York Wonderland probably thought so, agreeing with the Unicorn. And the extravert theory of modern education is very unicornish.

But Alice had other introvert traits, some of which were less defensible. She was timid, as Victorian maids were supposed to be, not regarding the harm that fear can do.<sup>29</sup> She was ashamed to ask questions, lest she be thought ignorant.<sup>30</sup> She didn't like to confess, even to herself, that she couldn't read "Jabberwocky".<sup>31</sup> She cried frequently and much.<sup>32</sup> She allowed the exaltation of her dream to make her regard the common way of life as stupid, a potentially dangerous habit if it becomes confirmed.<sup>33</sup> And though her intelligence sometimes penetrated the fallacies of the preposterous creatures who were browbeating her, and sometimes she petulantly hit out in self-defence, she could never *do* anything effective to change her tormentors or to revenge herself upon them.

It is significant also that her imagination, the characteristic wings of escape which made her independent of the tyrant world she could never master, was itself largely verbal. She was at her best in assisting with Humpty-Dumpty's exegesis of "Jabberwo-

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games like cards and chess, the satire on education, the repudiation of "the world" are characteristic medieval touches.

<sup>28</sup>*Looking-Glass*, p. 231. It is noteworthy that Dante thought the world so bad and Beatrice so good that he kept her out of the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio* as much as possible, merely there establishing her for the stellar part in the *Paradiso*. Is the part of Sylvie in SYLVIE AND BRUNO a sort of *Paradiso* for Alice?

<sup>29</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 19 and *passim*. See Bertrand Russell, *EDUCATION AND THE GOOD LIFE*, chap. 5.

<sup>30</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 19.

<sup>31</sup>*Looking-Glass*, p. 155.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 24, 27, 30, ff.

<sup>33</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 25.

ky",<sup>21</sup> but that very process was of a nature to make orthodox psychologists shiver, for she let the words suggest a conception of things, thus opening a way for distortion, and throwing a verbal haze between the mind and its external object of thought. The same kind of distortion is shown in her frequent puns, such as *tale* and *tail*, which influences her to remark that the narrator had reached "the fifth bend".<sup>22</sup> Granting that such aberrations are consciously introduced for purposes of humor, they nevertheless betray her characteristic manner of thinking. It is common observation that thing-minded, extravert people despise puns.

But of course Alice has the advantage of her word-mindedness. If she seldom thinks of people, places she has seen, or things from her experience, her ruminations are nevertheless full of imaginary conversations, facts rather hazily learned from books or lessons, stories, poems, proverbs, jingles. Her mind rejected the idea of Mabel or Ada, whom she knew (were they counterparts of Lorina and Edith?),<sup>23</sup> but she welcomed and actively developed various suggestions from stories. "Then I suppose they'll soon bring the white bread and the brown?"<sup>24</sup> she inquired, following out the story of the Lion and the Unicorn. Her device for testing her own sanity and identity was to recite "How doth the little busy bee."<sup>25</sup> Thus her mind was literary, if not very practical.

At this point it is necessary to inquire if some of these literary traits of the imaginary Alice may not have been really for the most part Lewis Carroll's traits, with which he had somewhat

<sup>21</sup>*Looking-Glass*, pp. 215-217. She was proud of knowing such words as *jurors* (*Wonderland*, p. 115), *suppressed* (*Wonderland*, p. 120), and *unsatisfactory* (*Looking-Glass*, p. 221); but she was ignorant of the rowing expressions *to feather* and *to catch a crab* (*Looking-Glass*, p. 204), and she sometimes made such slips as *antipathies* for *antipodes* (*Wonderland*, p. 19), or the unorthodox comparative *curiouser* (*Wonderland*, p. 26). It is true of course that all these are by way of verbal humor, but they also fit into the picture of her character.

<sup>22</sup>*Wonderland*, pp. 39-41. The same passage plays on *not* and *knot*. Elsewhere she reflects that it will hardly take long to see the White Knight off (*Looking-Glass*, p. 248).

<sup>23</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 29.

<sup>24</sup>*Looking-Glass*, p. 228.

<sup>25</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 29. She also goes into the appropriate rimes for Humpty Dumpty (*Looking-Glass*, p. 209) and Tweedledum and Tweedledee (*Looking-Glass*, p. 181). "Father William" (*Wonderland*, p. 55) and "Tis the voice of the sluggard" (*Wonderland*, p. 110) are unsuccessful attempts from her repertoire. Her knowledge of facts from her school work was generally unreliable (see *Wonderland*, 67, 97, 103, 168). She knew the tune of the song "I give thee all, I can no more" (*Looking-Glass*, p. 245).



plentifully endowed his heroine, in spite of his effort to present a restrained and realistic picture. The character Alice was "named after a real Alice, but none the less a dream child", he wrote to Miss M. E. Manners.<sup>88</sup> It was the mind of Lewis Carroll, as author of the dream, that conceived the Mock Turtle, the Rocking-horse-fly, the bread-and-butter-fly, and the snap-dragon-fly,<sup>89</sup> conceptions in which words certainly tyrannize over things. And likewise the poems for which Alice is not represented as being responsible are nearly as derivative as the others.<sup>90</sup> For the fact is that, whatever might have been true of Alice Liddell, Lewis Carroll had a literary mind. That is, books, poems, stories, and information from them, were more to him than the solid experience of sense, especially experiences in the adult world. As a child he drew pictures, published an amateur periodical, read a great deal, and excelled in mathematics. As a man, he taught his students, lived alone, and wrote a great many books. Except for the children, with whom he associated upon intimate terms, his was a life of medieval, almost monastic retreat from society. To him studies and children were the great realities.

His lack of much vital contact with the adult world may account for the rigid conservatism with no will for reform, which critics have noted in him. "He could not really imagine anything," says Chesterton, "that made the first last and the last first."<sup>91</sup> Of course this can hardly apply to the nonsense of the Alice books, where first and last shift with bewildering rapidity, and all the high and mighty are only a pack of cards after all. Alice developed from pawn to queen. Humpty-Dumpty had a fall, and the Jabberwock was slain. It was only the actual adult world that Lewis Carroll did not seek to reform fundamentally. Why? Probably because he was not much interested. It seemed to be no great hardship for him to let Caesar have the things that were Caesar's. The world of children and the world of the literary imagination satis-

<sup>88</sup>Collingwood, *op. cit.*, p. 365.

<sup>89</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 99; *Looking-Glass*, p. 174.

<sup>90</sup>For example, "Beautiful Soup" is a parody on the then popular song "Star of the Evening"; the White Knight's "Aged Aged Man" parodies Wordsworth's "Resolution and Independence". For a table of the obvious parodies in Lewis Carroll's books, see Williams and Madan, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>91</sup>"The 100th Birthday of Nonsense", *New York Times*, Jan. 24, 1932, sec. 2, pp. 1-2, 22.

fied him. And his purpose of amusing children made against serious social criticism. If children might find reform dull, he was not one to put it into the story. The contrast between him and Swift or Rabelais is not so much that he attacks abuses less mordantly, but that he amuses children more consistently.

To understand this attitude better, we must take into account what few writers have even mentioned, the sexual peculiarity of the man. A bachelor all his days, held by a strict conscience to super-chastity, Lewis Carroll found in a sublimated friendship with little girls the emotional release which most men look for in love and marriage. He did not marry, he told Miss Manners, because he never found a woman with whom he could imagine getting on for more than two weeks; but with little Isa Bowman he lived very happily for a month.<sup>70</sup> His letters to children often reveal, but thinly disguised under playful nonsense, the essential spirit of romantic love.<sup>71</sup> And when the White Knight, who, we cannot help suspecting, is in some ways Lewis Carroll himself, takes leave of Alice, his sentimental request that she wave her handkerchief to encourage him has in it a ring of sincerity beyond anything else in the stories.<sup>72</sup> The sister's wish regarding Alice at the end of *Wonderland* was that "she would keep, through all her riper years, the simple and loving heart of her childhood."<sup>73</sup> This wish seems to contain a mixture of religion and his characteristic sublimated sex. If the kingdom of heaven is made up of child-like souls, as the Bible says, then a lover of children may expect, in the Christian heaven, souls most especially to his taste. In the preface to *Alice Underground*, the desire for a child's love, "a little child's whispered thanks, and the airy touch of a little child's pure lips",<sup>74</sup> is described as a motive very close to sheer unselfishness. At any rate, it was probably the strongest motive in Lewis Carroll's life. The relation between sex and religion has often been stressed.<sup>75</sup> It is not surprising that this less usual deviation of sex should likewise have its religious bearing. Like the ladies in many sonnet sequences, Alice is the symbol of love,

<sup>70</sup>Collingwood, op. cit., p. 400.

<sup>71</sup>For example, see Moses, op. cit., pp. 251 f.

<sup>72</sup>*Looking-Glass*, p. 248.

<sup>73</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 131.

<sup>74</sup>Moses, op. cit., p. 126.

<sup>75</sup>See William James, *VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE*, *passim*.

both romantic and religious—alone to be accepted as “the greatest thing in the world”.

But it is the tragedy of those who build their lives upon the love of children in this world that the children do grow up. His own sisters grew up, and were only a wet blanket when he took them one day with the little Liddells on the river. Alice grew up, and, whether or not she kept anything of the child heart as he wished, his letters to “My dear Mrs. Hargreaves” hold but a pale reflection of the fresh emotion in his letters to real children. In fact, as one reads the life of Lewis Carroll, there rises a growing pathos from the procession of little girls who successively held his affections, matured beyond his emotional reach, and left with him at most only a sad memory of happy hours. The brevity and futility of the often-repeated experience remind one of the quick wilting of cut flowers. Life is like that at best, but this was an abbreviation of the common lot. Possibly it is his feeling of this that comes out in his recurring use of the dream as the most fitting symbol of life, especially where children are concerned. The *Looking-Glass* ends with the famous verse, “Life, what is it but a dream?” That poem is an acrostic, spelling out the name of Alice Pleasance Liddell. *Sylvie and Bruno* is introduced by the verse, “Is all our Life, then, but a dream?” That poem is a complex acrostic on the name Isa Bowman. Between those two loves of Lewis Carroll had gone many others: Alexandra (Xie) Kitchin, Isabel Standen, Adelaide Paine, Gaynor Simpson, Gertrude Chat-away (to whom *The Hunting of the Snark* is inscribed), Edith Rix, Kathleen Eschwege, Agnes Hughes, etc.” Is it to be wondered at, after this experience in loving and losing, that in the poem to Isa the dream is a gloomy one?

But the love for Alice was fresher, undimmed by more than a vague prescience of the leavetaking at the “brook” just ahead. The “moral” which he apparently hoped Alice would get from the stories is, “Don’t grow up”. Here is the object lesson in the unconscionableness of adulthood: take heed. Behold the witless truculence of Tweedledum and Tweedledee; that is the adult British male. Note well the Duchess, the Queen of Hearts, the Red Queen, the White Queen; they exemplify the adult British

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\*See Collingwood, *op. cit.*, chaps. 10-11.

female. Look at the Gryphon and the Mock Turtle; they are the grown-up product of schools. Consider Humpty-Dumpty; he is the professor in an eggshell. And so when she has had her experience of this sort of thing, and with her clear wit of childhood has pierced the shallow pretentiousness, he hopes that his Alice will keep her child heart through life." Thus he might have Alice the child always. It was a vain hope. He never dared such a hope again. The "happy nightmare", as Chesterton calls Wonderland," was a nightmare because it exposed the adult world which Lewis Carroll (like a medieval monk, but for a different motive) repudiated. It was happy because Alice, the child, was there, and he dared to dream of her as permanently a child. The glory of the book is the real permanence of the "ideal Alice".

Still she haunts me, phantomwise.  
Alice moving under skies  
Never seen by waking eyes."

Seldom does an author make a believable character of a heroine with whom he has fallen in love. Lewis Carroll owes his success to two things. (1) By taking the point of view of Alice, he was prevented from praising her unduly and falling into the sentimentality which, forsaking humor, he was liable. Since he hated most of the other characters, he made them disagreeable by allowing them to browbeat his heroine. (2) As for her character, he endowed her generously with his own, which, it happened, was plaus-

"See H. M. Ayres, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-173. Compare also the purport of Christopher Morley's *THUNDER ON THE LEFT*.

"*Op. cit.*, p. 22. Chesterton contends that Carroll's nonsense is "nonsense for nonsense's sake", that common sense is amputated, as Dr. Jekyll amputated his conscience. But I do not think that this amputation was just for fun, merely "for nonsense's sake". Carroll castigated adult common sense, slashed it and mutilated it unmercifully, mocked it and made merry over its dead body. He hated it. That's why. He hated adulthood, and he scorned the adult manner of thinking. As a philosophical logician (some members of that calling follow the laws of thought with no more imagination or discrimination than an adding machine) he knew that most boasted reasoning is rationalizing, conceived in pride or in self-defence after the decision is made, and abounding in fallacies of every kind. (See James Harvey Robinson, *THE MIND IN THE MAKING*, chap. 4.) He knew the part that affrontery and bluff play in men's most imposing arguments. And he knew that when an adult lays aside the stick and begins reasoning with a child, the change is not so great as one might hope.

"*Looking-Glass*, p. 272.

ibly childlike. Her self-control,<sup>80</sup> her truthfulness,<sup>81</sup> her dislike of emotional arguments,<sup>82</sup> her thoughtfulness,<sup>83</sup> her tendency to escape in dreams and imagination,<sup>84</sup> her sensitiveness,<sup>85</sup> her habit of cautious understatement,<sup>86</sup> her embarrassment at the affection of women,<sup>87</sup> her sincere desire to please,<sup>88</sup> her straight thinking when she really understood a situation,<sup>89</sup> her sincere good manners which turned to rudeness and a desperately vehement pertness when people were too rude to her;<sup>90</sup> all these traits become Alice very well, and harmonize in her character, for they were first genuinely fused in the character of Lewis Carroll.<sup>91</sup>

Many people may think that a child's character is really more simple than this. But they are wrong. A child's character is desperately complex, as students of childhood all know, and as all discriminating parents agree. In fact, Carroll fails to do justice to this complexity, at least to the extent of his Victorian reticences. And other people may complain that as they remember Alice of Wonderland from their early reading, she seemed a very simple child, colorless, with little or no character of her own, moving among a phantasmagoria of sharply defined individuals. Is our interpretation, sometimes between the lines, this collection of scattered references, perhaps misleading?

Any such attribution of colorlessness to the character of Alice is probably due to: (1) the influence of Tenniel's illustrations; (2) the failure of some readers, as children, lost in a gorgeous story, to appreciate or even notice character at all; (3) the natural tendency of a fairly realistic personality to seem unremark-

<sup>80</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 85. <sup>81</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 61. <sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 65; *Looking-Glass*, p. 211.

<sup>83</sup>*Looking-Glass*, p. 188.

<sup>84</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 188-189, 272.

<sup>85</sup>*Wonderland*, pp. 55, 101-102; *Looking-Glass*, pp. 188, 190, 200.

<sup>86</sup>"People don't fall off quite so easily, when they've had much practice." (*Looking-Glass*, p. 239.) "She had never forgotten that, if you drink much from a bottle marked 'poison', it is almost certain to disagree with you, sooner or later." (*Wonderland*, p. 22.)

<sup>87</sup>*Wonderland*, pp. 96-98; *Looking-Glass*, pp. 257-258.

<sup>88</sup>*Wonderland*, p. 33 and *passim*.

<sup>89</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 86. What's the use of a procession if the spectators lie down and don't see it?

<sup>90</sup>Manners: *Wonderland*, pp. 75, 97; rudeness: *Ibid.*, pp. 81, 88, 98, 125; *Looking-Glass*, p. 252. Probably, to children, adults seem extremely rude most of the time. Note the cross, scolding voices or simpering, hypocritical tones which children assume when they impersonate adults. Are they much mistaken?

<sup>91</sup>See Collingwood's biography, which furnishes illustrations of these qualities on every page.



able among vigorous caricatures; (4) the too common assumption that any child, by virtue of being a child, can as a matter of course have no significant traits, no general interest. Most of these obstacles to an appreciation of Alice vanish as soon as one recognizes their existence. But the effect of the Tenniel drawings will require some explanation.

### III

Harry Furniss, who illustrated *Sylvie and Bruno*, wrote that Carroll did not, in general, like Tenniel's drawings.<sup>25</sup> While this statement may be colored by professional jealousy (Carroll asked Tenniel to illustrate another of his books<sup>26</sup>), there is evidence that the illustrations, which have rivaled the popularity of the stories themselves, were less satisfactory to the author than to the general public. He complained, for one thing, that Tenniel would not work from models, and that artists who drew from their own imagination made their characters monotonously alike, or without significant individualizing traits.<sup>27</sup> Though this lack of individuality can hardly be urged against most of Tenniel's Wonderland creatures, it is true that his Alice has rather blank, regular features, generally suggesting too much maturity, and almost never revealing the inward appreciativeness suggested by the text. One suspects that Tenniel interpreted the various situations of Alice as if she were a grown woman, and then accommodated the postures and expressions as best he could to the scale of the child. But the worst of it is that he always presents Alice with an apparent extravert interest in her surroundings, whereas the text reveals her as busy with her own speculations, often very skeptical of her specious companions. Carroll's photographs of Alice Liddell show a child with an air of being spiritually remote from the present physical scene. Probably Tenniel, with his gift for sharp perception of those conspicuous signs which feed the car-

<sup>25</sup>Quoted in Williams and Madan, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

<sup>26</sup>Collingwood, *op. cit.*, p. 146. The fact that Carroll criticized Tenniel's work while it was in progress was doubtless only part of his general fussy attention to details. But if one will take the trouble to go through the references to Tenniel in Collingwood's index, Carroll's unfavorable comments will be found in nearly every reference.

<sup>27</sup>Collingwood, *op. cit.*, p. 199.



toonist's craft, had not the temperament, the perception, or the art to draw Alice subtly with the knowing abstraction of a Mona Lisa beneath a child's simplicity. Most children, probably, would fail to appreciate such illustrations, just as they overlook the deeper implications of the story itself. Children seldom complain of a blank pretty face in a picture; they enjoy the dimpled insipidity of their dolls. They may deplore Alice's old-fashioned clothes or her long straight hair, but they hardly notice the frequent mature sophistication of her features. If she seems rather old, they attribute the impression to the length of her dress, but for most children her diminutive size is sufficient evidence of her youth. Lewis Carroll, however, may well have deplored in Tenniel's work the almost total absence of Alice Liddell's genuine child nature with its piquant individual air of abstraction; and the absence or misinterpretation of his idealized Alice's inner poise and naïve, uncynical skepticism. The main trouble is that Alice is no subject for caricature. The story puts a caricatured society in very unflattering comparison with the candid intelligence of a wise but realistic child. The author was able to do both the satiric sketch and the subtly significant portrait. But Tenniel's great gift sufficed only for the sketch. His attempt at a sympathetic portrait of Alice resulted in a somewhat too graceful doll, with the expression and most of the features of an adult sophisticate. Tenniel was wise in declining to undertake illustrations for *Sylvie and Bruno*, a story that stressed the seriousness of Lewis Carroll, and diminished the satire.

Children often gaze intently at Tenniel's pictures while some one reads aloud the story of the Alice books. At all events, the pictures are likely to make the deeper, more immediate impression upon them, and suggest an easy, unsubtle interpretation of Alice's character. Child readers hardly heed or easily forget the heroine's revealing reveries, but remember the doll-like figure from the drawings, quaint, not very impressive, and somewhat irrelevant to the astonishing creatures of wonder and satire. When these child readers become adults, they recall Alice as the admirable but unimportant little spectator who won immortality by happening upon a gorgeous pageant of marvels, thanks to the unique genius of Lewis Carroll.

But Alice was a real child without whose unique qualities Carroll himself would never have discovered Wonderland. And she was also a creature of his own imagination, embodying many of his best qualities and standing for that which he found best in life. As such, she was simple, candid, shrewd, a child of good will, not to be stultified by all the bluster of imposing stupidity, immortal in her forthright and beautiful integrity.

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*by William S. Knickerbocker*

## TEA ON MONDAY

Possessing Monday afternoons for parley,  
The Bishop's daughter welcomes each  
Newcomer to her candle-lighted table  
With ligaments of ghostly reach.

Exciting fumes of shining emanations  
To compensate the mind's delay,  
Elusive coils of ancient reminiscence  
Exude and vanish in array.

Supremely blithe, she lifts her copper kettle  
From its hook above the flame,  
Influctuates to cups her brew of Ceylon,  
Bewitching Caesars to her claim.

Oblivious to the wrack of broken patterns,  
Indifferent to our modern sway,  
Wrought valiantly in cantilever epochs,  
The Bishop's daughter has her day.

*by L. Robert Lind*

## THE CRISIS IN LITERATURE

### VI—CONCLUSION

LITERATURE tends to become, in a highly self-conscious age like our own, a part of something larger than itself. It becomes part of a personal vision of life ultimately expressed in a legend, in a moral philosophy, or in religion. Writers such as Yeats create a legend from which their poetry in its later phase is forced into a greater consciousness of the external world in order that it may not remain isolated and sterile; the prose of Henry James and most of the literature written by men who belong to the tradition he established expresses a moral philosophy in which the Marxians, for example, are surprisingly close to some of their less fully oriented contemporaries, and, at least in their consistency, not far from the New Humanists. Both the later prose and poetry of T. S. Eliot and the position of I. A. Richards in SCIENCE AND POETRY represent the culmination of literature, by a process of logic, in religion.

The aesthetics of the "art for art's sake" writers, to use a most unsatisfactory term that seems to mean little save a type of literature divorced from morals or a sense of social responsibility, has been active in creating the personal legends which become more and more rare as life impinges more closely upon the writer. Out of the view that regards literature as rightly culminating in religion has arisen an emphasis upon a tradition which entails the fallacies that Stephen Spender has pointed out; it is the view least likely to find wide adherence or to satisfy more than a few. Moral philosophy remains as the most widely accepted view of the ideal function of literature and certainly the view which provides a growing body of example today.

There are divisions of opinion as to the type of moral philosophy best suited to answer the needs of the modern world. Not



to simplify matters beyond reason and reality, these divisions may be resolved into the materialism that gives rise to Marxian socialism, the rationalism which inspires the New Humanists and the adherents to classical tradition, and the Bergsonian intuitionism behind much of the work of the stream of consciousness school.

Of these three philosophies, two look backward in their literary inspiration: New Humanism and intuitionism, one to classical tradition, the other to Symbolism. Only one, in any practical way and whether or not we are able to disengage it from the rationalism to which it is attached by the argument of Ortega y Gasset, looks forward to the future: Marxian socialism. All three attempt to provide a complete interpretation of life and purpose and all have their great documents to which their defenders may have recourse for example and conviction. To all three, politics is, and I think rightly, of secondary importance, while two almost completely discount or at least neglect the influence of economics.

Within these broad outlines and under circumstances which, of course, allow much individual overlapping, the literature of our time is being created. What is abundantly clear is that the past is drawn upon by exponents of all three views of life; they are conscious of an increased responsibility toward the task of interpreting existence with reasonable inclusiveness, and all have valid claims upon the attentions of those who are really interested in the the future of culture.

The choice which lies before the writers of our generation and the next is thus seen to be a moral choice in keeping with well-defined tendencies growing stronger each year. The problem of literature has become, as never before, an ethical problem, a problem inextricably bound up with the conditions under which life and conduct can be carried on at all. In the crisis of literature this choice is forced upon the writer if he is to continue in his historical rôle as the advance-guard, the creative artist who enters "new countries" and brings back the news that can best serve to guide a humanity possessed of the "only generally held belief today", as Spender puts it—in Scientific Progress.

It is plain from every investigation of ethics made in the world's history that there is no absolute here: Custom and Authority have so varied from age to age and people to people as to make the axiom upon which Westermarck based his ORIGIN AND DEVELOP-

MENT OF THE MORAL IDEAS an obvious and necessary one. Yet it is with personal belief that the best literature concerns itself and must continue to concern itself; while literature of a certain restricted type may, as in T. S. Eliot's reading of Dante or Eliot's own poetry as read by one of his disciples, dispense with meaning, a belief of some sort, if only in the reality of a particular aesthetic experience, is generated. Even *Alice in Wonderland* may, and usually does, promote a belief of some sort, if only in the topsy-turvy universe which Alice enters and returns from in the course of a summer afternoon dream beside the rabbit-hole. The suspension of belief preached almost as dogma by some critics and writers is psychologically impossible.

This emphasis upon belief is central in Spender's *THE DESTRUCTIVE ELEMENT*. All the writers he treats—and they are among the most important of our time—fall into three categories, on the basis of their attitudes or beliefs: (p. 204)

(1) There is the attitude of the writer who consciously expresses no belief. (Eliot, Yeats, Virginia Woolf, etc.)

(2) There is the attitude of the writer who expresses a private individualistic belief. . . .

(3) There is the writer who interprets an existing belief or foretells a future belief. (i.e., in *Progress and Success*, as the majority of writers from Shaw, Wells, Priestley, to Noel Coward and Beverley Nichols downwards, and, secondly, the Communist writers).

It is clear from my argument of this extended essay, as well as from a majority of the books and articles mentioned or quoted herein, that a definite choice of belief is axiomatic for the writer who hopes to achieve significant work; but it is not completely apparent as to which belief of the several major world-views at present available he should choose. If religion, Communism, or a personal legend created within the personal consciousness, fails to satisfy one's artistic and ethical aspirations, it is difficult what to suggest in the way of a dominating and all-sustaining framework of belief—and this is part of the crisis of the literary man as well as of literature. The development of Henry James in his art, through a personally constructed universe toward a devastating criticism of bourgeois society will point the way for some writers; a few others may prefer to progress through a period of

prolonged scepticism to a final acceptance of orthodox Catholicism, as does T. S. Eliot, who has had such a deep influence even upon those who profoundly disagree with him. Or the personal legend of Yeats, giving way in his later work to an increased consciousness of the actual world around him and a determination to make it the center of his literary approach, may be possible to others.

This representation of the various choices of technique and moral outlook does not, of course, rule out an eclecticism or a synthesis of all available major beliefs, fantastic as that may sound. New beliefs are also being added, as by the Auden-Spender-Lewis group among whom the individual preserves his individuality with great strength and clarity within the collectivist-Communist framework to which this group leans. It is the constant wonder and delight of literature that it is able to create new beliefs and, unlike religion, to build upon already created values another and more shining edifice that does not require the crystallizing effects of dogma to render it permanent. But even into the Communist view of life, I feel, there must increasingly enter something of the spirit which impelled D. H. Lawrence to the following utterance<sup>1</sup>:

It's time there was an *enormous* revolution—not to install soviets, but to give life itself a chance. What's the good of an industrial system piling up rubbish, while nobody lives? We want a revolution not in the name of money or work or any of that, but of life—and let money and work be as casual in human life as they are in a bird's life, damn it all. Oh, it's time the whole thing was changed, absolutely. And the men will have to do it—you've got to smash money and this beastly *possessive* spirit. I get more revolutionary every minute, but for *life's* sake. The dead materialism of Marx socialism and soviets seems to me no better than what we've got. What we want is life and *trust*; men trusting men, and making living a free thing, not a thing to be *earned*. But if men trusted men, we could soon have a new world, and send this one to devil. There's more message—perhaps too strong for you! But the beastliness of the show, the *injustice*—just see the rich English down here on the Riviera, *thousands* of them—nauseates me. Men can't stand injustice.

<sup>1</sup>In 1928. See THE LETTERS OF D. H. LAWRENCE, ed. by Aldous Huxley (New York, Viking Press, 1932) Pp. 779.

And again in the impassioned "New Years's Greeting to the Willingdon Men, for 1929":

O! start a revolution, somebody!  
Not to get the money,  
But to lose it all forever!  
O! start a revolution, somebody!  
Not to install the working classes,  
But to abolish the working classes forever  
And have a world of men.

## II

There are those, of course, who will flatly and vehemently deny that capitalism has anything to do with the state of literature as it has been sketched in these pages. But in doing so they must insist that the social and economic environment has never influenced the literature which grows within it; they must strain at this rather considerable gnat if they admit, as they readily will, that the converse is true, that literature has its effects upon the particular civilization under which it flourishes. Nor is it merely a matter of degree; if capitalism does not profoundly affect the nature of modern literature, then literature has never been profoundly affected by any social system of the past, by tyranny, monarchy, feudalism, or bourgeois democracy. The exact nature of this influence it has not been my central purpose to analyze here; critics are at the moment busily engaged in gathering the irrefutable evidence for it, while the conviction as to its existence grows stronger daily.

Perhaps these people may, upon other grounds, attempt to explain away the sense of despair and remorseless disintegration of will that characterize the greater part of writing today. They may say that the tragic sense of life is, for the time, more highly accentuated and intensified in a period which seems the culmination of all human tragedy following upon, and converging into, the greatest war of history. Yet the quality of that sense of tragedy is no more intense than the tragic sense of life which enabled the ancient Greek to contemplate with calm acceptance a world scarcely less terrible than the one we know, equally the victim of war, despotism, and economic inequality. That tragedy which is the greatest glory of Elizabethan literature was likewise no less a major part of a world-view in a particular age, a transcendent

emotion which, as among the Greeks, swept audiences into a vast and ennobling realization of man's ancient battle with the Universe. But there is this difference: the tragic sense of life among the Greeks was linked with courage and hopeless Promethean defiance in a way quite apart from the contemporary feeling of tragedy. The Greeks expressed in their tragedy both the instinctive and intellectual acquiescence of a people in things as they are, without the insistent cry for things as they should be which blends with modern tragedy. Rebellion is the significant keynote of modern tragedy, while hope lingers unquenched behind it. It is this rebellion and this hope which serve to shore up individual despair against chaos; it rescues the genuine intellectual anxiety of the few from the great wash of sentimental and chiefly sexual discontents of the many.

The great modern tragedy still remains to be written, and it will be written when the conflicts of war and economic injustice have worn themselves out upon the stage of world history. It will be a tragedy, not hopeless in despair like that of Prometheus and Oedipus, nor almost wholly absorbed in the idea of death, as Elizabethan tragedy; it will be a tragedy filled with rebellious hope and the promise of life.



by Eleanor Glenn Wallis

## ESCAPE OF A RIVER-PIG

Never had Cynthia seen a quainter sight  
Than golden river-hogs among the yarrow:  
Great boars with silver crests and manes as white  
As scud on orange bristles and their farrow  
Banded with gold, the supercilious snouts  
(Pink and beglazed) uprooting savory sprouts,

While at their heels the sow's maternal snuffle  
Prodded them faster than they cared to go  
Whose snouts were cunning to detect a truffle  
Beneath the sod where no one else would know  
That it was hidden, whitely fleshed and firm,  
Nor lightly to be given to the worm.

And Cynthia thought: *If I might have a pig  
(Ruffled of snout) to wear (when he is grown)  
A foaming crest, blond as the powdered wig  
An old-time courtier wore, a mane wind-blown  
And haughty as a wave upon the sea,  
How very, very happy I should be!*

*They trot at ease, they are not apprehensive;  
I think perhaps they never saw a girl.  
Maybe if I stole nearer, looking pensive,  
And sprinkled salt upon his tail's bright curl,  
The smallest pig would let me pick him up  
And hold him as I hold my Schnauzer pup.*

So saying, Cynthia felt within her pocket  
 And cannily withdrew a pinch of salt:  
 The littlest pig's eye rolled within its socket  
 As he would bid her be discreet and halt. . . .  
 Then suddenly his small obstreperous heels  
 Were lifted and his throat was full of squeals.

As he were greased, he slipped from out her hold,  
 He shot between her legs, he scuttled under  
 His dam's lean flank. . . across the sunny wold  
 The river-hogs now broke in golden thunder  
 While Cynthia stood abashed, her freckled cheek  
 Become the channel of a salty creek.

by *Lodwick Hartley*

## KATHERINE ANNE PORTER

**S**EVERAL years ago Miss Porter, writing autobiographically and critically, asserted:

. . . my one aim is to tell a straight story and to give true testimony. My personal life has been the jumbled and apparently irrelevant mass of experiences which can only happen, I think, to a woman who goes with her mind permanently absent from the place where she is . . . I have very little time sense and almost no sense of distance. I have no sense of direction and have seen a great deal of the world by getting completely lost and simply taking in the scenery as I roamed about getting my bearings.

The statement falls far short of comprehending the author's exquisite art, but it furnishes a valuable index both to its achievements and to its limitations.

Since the publication of *FLOWERING JUDAS AND OTHER STORIES* in 1930 few discriminating readers of the short story in America have spoken of Miss Porter without ecstasy. None has spoken of her without respect. As a stylist she has been mentioned in the same breath with Hawthorne, Flaubert, and Maupassant. Very recently Mr. Christopher Isherwood made proper apologies for her not being better known in England. Indeed, if her popularity has been confined to a relatively select group of American readers, the fault lies only with those who have not discovered her. Fortunately, the inclusion of her stories in anthologies is rapidly widening her audience.

To her friends the artist has already become a legend. Her life-thread stretches from Texas to Louisiana to Mexico to France and back again. From her experience and her travel she has collected material that is anything but irrelevant when it finds a place in her narrative art. She has observed with miraculous keenness. She has remembered with amazing accuracy. Not

Proust himself could revivify a detail from the past with more telling effect.

Miss Porter produces slowly; hence her output for the past ten years has been very small. But in an age of overwriting and of puffy omnibus novels, her two slender volumes offer refreshing relief. She nowhere gives the impression of being the too conscientious lapidary, polishing and repolishing until the original surface is entirely lost. One suspects that her small output has another explanation: namely, that she never writes unless she cannot escape writing. Thus, although she may take months to produce one story, her work always has a striking immediacy.

The task of classifying Miss Porter in the field of the narrative is not simple. *FLOWERING JUDAS* is ostensibly a collection of short stories; whereas the stories in *PALE HORSE*, *PALE RIDER*, her second volume, are presented as short novels. The vexing question of the difference between the short story and the short novel once more rears its ugly head. Perhaps the safest course for the critic is to ride on the horns of the dilemma. Through their concentration and limited range many of the stories in *FLOWERING JUDAS* clearly fall into the province of the short story. When the narrative turns on a specific psychological problem as does "Rope" or a highly particularized situation as does "Magic", classification offers no real difficulty. But with all their compactness of expression, several of the stories in the first volume become remarkably expansive, and one quite frequently has the feeling that they are embryonic novels—or, what is more accurate, novels with all extraneous matter rigidly excised.

Although Miss Porter can produce short stories of superb quality, a survey of the whole of her work may convince one that she has never been wholly contented with the form. She senses acutely its limitations. She fears its unhappy tendency to turn on a trick ending or to develop into an anecdote. "Magic" is an excellent example of a successful attempt to keep an anecdote from seeming like one. The narrator tells a tale of cruelty and sympathetic magic, near the end of which the listener asks, with the normal desire for *dénouement*, "Yes, and then?" But there is no pointing of the conclusion. The climax comes with the perfect naturalness of being inherent in the tale. It is adroitly blunted.

(What is less fortunate in this case is that it is made exegetic.) Again, in "That Tree" the author, finding herself faced with the possibility of a conventional ending, cleverly sidesteps and fixes the onus both of theme and technique on the egocentric journalist who is the central figure. "I've been working up to the climax all this time," he is made to remark when it is time for the story to make its turn. "You know, good old surprise technique. Now then, get ready." In both stories the author has triumphed over potential and technical difficulties by sheer cleverness. The double stroke in the second is extremely ingenious.

A complete structural triumph is "Rope", in which a domestic quarrel develops with unerring logic and is concluded with equal lack of logic. Even here, if one wishes to push the point, is a sublimation of "good old surprise technique". But the danger of the surprise ending is more apparent than real. A greater danger for Miss Porter lies in the attempt to give a story a "moral" turn. All her cleverness, for example, could not save her from the tag of "Theft", in which the heroine and the story are allowed to conclude with the following: "I was right not to be afraid of any thief but myself, who will end by leaving me nothing." (One is assailed with a line of bromidic suggestion from "The Ballad of Reading Gaol.") The same danger, "Flowering Judas", with all its charm, cannot quite escape.

In "He", the story of a mother's love for a simple-minded son, Miss Porter has told a "straight story" with well-nigh perfect economy and concentration. For delicate emotional control it has rarely been excelled, and for stark simplicity of treatment it reminds one of Knut Hamsun. But Miss Porter's economy can produce more than magnificent bareness. In "María Concepción" it creates an effect of richness and color, admirably in keeping with a story of primitive passion and revenge. With all its impression of leisureliness, the story is a closely knit narrative. "The Jilting of Granny Weatherall" is a piece of stream-of-consciousness writing worthy of commanding envy from Mrs. Virginia Woolf or Miss Dorothy Richardson. Turning on a charming old lady's death-bed memory of a lost love, the story achieves a marvelously beautiful pattern in its patternlessness.

Even in "That Tree", the classification of which as a short



story it would be useless to challenge, there is a definite hint of expansiveness, suggesting a movement toward the novel. Away from the witchery of the style and symbolism of "Judas Tree", one may sense the fact that the story tends to sprawl structurally, and one could hardly fail to detect the loose-jointed, panoramic quality of "Hacienda". Except for its length, "The Cracked Looking Glass" can almost as justifiably be called a novel as *A LOST LADY* or *MADAME BOVARY* can be. Married to a husband older than she by many years, the heroine of Miss Porter's story seeks the affection and companionship of younger men as an escape from a frustration that remains subtly subconscious. She does so, however, without giving herself up; and she does not realize her compromise. Having left her husband on the pretext of visiting a sick sister, she picks up a penniless Irish boy in Boston. When she feeds him and offers him a home, he suspects seduction. She recoils in disgust. Realizing her ultimate defeat, she returns to her husband. Now that her youth is irreparably lost, she must find in her aged husband her only spiritual bulwark. With all other possibilities of emotional outlet closed, she mothers him. No synopsis can do Miss Porter justice, especially in a story of penetrating character analysis; but even an adequate synopsis may suggest that the total effect of "The Cracked Looking Glass" is that of a novel from which all but essential matter has been omitted.

"The Cracked Looking Glass" has the same splendid tautness that makes "Noon Wine", at least structurally, the finest achievement of Miss Porter's second volume. In Mr. Helton, the escaped Swedish lunatic, there is a portrait that in sureness of line surpasses another with which it bears comparison, that of Lennie in Steinbeck's *OF MICE AND MEN*. Helton's methodical efficiency on the farm of Mr. Thompson—a Texan handicapped by a sickly wife and by his own genteel shiftlessness—makes the Swedish hired man so much a part of the life of his employer that Mr. Thompson is led to commit murder to protect him. The action moves so simply and unerringly as to command wonder. The last part of the story—Mr. Thompson's attempt to vindicate himself in the eyes of his neighbors—leans heavily on Maupassant's "A Piece of String", but the influence is perfectly assimilated.

The remaining two stories of the second volume are not so flawlessly planned. "Old Mortality", constructed like a chronicle novel, presents the traditions of a Southern family as seen through the eye of two children, Miranda and Maria. The theme finds explicit statement:

The loyalty of their father's in the face of evidence contrary to his ideal had its spring in family feeling, and a love of legend that he shared with the others. . . . Their hearts and imaginations were captivated by their past, a past in which worldly considerations had played a minor rôle.

The central figure is Aunt Amy, a perverse and strangely fascinating Southern belle who married without love and who died under mysterious circumstances. The first part of the story shows how this remarkable young lady is evoked from a family portrait and from family legend by the two little girls who bring the story into focus. The second part revolves about a visit made by the girls some years later to Aunt Amy's husband, Uncle Gabriel, who is continuing to pursue an old passion for race horses and who is married to a frustrated second wife. The third part deals with Miranda's revolt from the false and romantic notions of her family and of the life in which she was brought up. The story is told with great richness and beauty of detail, but its purpose is not entirely certain and its climax lacks the authority of complete inevitability. The development of Miranda throughout the story hardly justifies laying the "turn" of the story on her shoulders, especially since her revolt in the final analysis involves much more than the theme of the story demands for satisfactory completion.

"Pale Horse, Pale Rider" misses complete success for another reason. It, too, is expansive in its scope, containing material that a less skillful artist would have stretched into a full-length novel. It often approaches magnificence in its creation of the American scene during the World War: the hysteria, the jingoism, the frantic desire of youth to live before it was too late. Miranda, all but completely dissociated from the situation with which the preceding story concluded, is the central figure. Her love affair with the young soldier, Adam, is interrupted by her falling a victim of the influenza epidemic of 1918. She recovers only to

find that Adam has succumbed and that she must face a life of emptiness. The defect here is not one of structure but of method. As I have already suggested, Miss Porter can use both the objective and the subjective methods with effectiveness; but when she combines the two, she does not move so surely as she might. In "Pale Horse, Pale Rider" the center of the picture is clear enough, but the edges seem blurred.

## II

Miss Porter achieves her greatest success when she is most objective. At her best she challenges Maupassant. Complete detachment in "Magic" allows her to tell with ineffably cool poise a story that might have been violently repulsive. In "He", "The Cracked Looking Glass", and "Noon Wine" the ability to hold her subjects at arm's length allows her to achieve fine structural symmetry and totality of effect. When Miss Porter identifies herself subjectively with her heroines, she at times loses strength and directness. Her art may also tend to lose the androgynous quality of great narrative genius and to become distinctively effeminate.

When Flaubert said that he *was* Madame Bovary, he was merely stating an artistic truism. Any good writer must *be* his characters if he is to make them live. However, this kind of identification is plainly dramatic or objective, and it is a vastly different matter from Thackeray's projection of his own experience in Pendennis, Thomas Wolfe's in Eugene Gant, James Joyce's in Stephen Dedalus. Without knowing the biographical facts, we can hardly avoid identifying Miss Porter with the Miranda of her stories whether she appears under that name, or as Laura in "Flowering Judas", or as the unnamed writer in "Theft" and "Hacienda". Of Miranda we may reconstruct some sort of biography. In "The Grave" we see her as a charmingly tomboyish child in Texas. ("What I like about shooting," said Miranda with exasperating inconsequence, "is pulling the trigger and hearing the noise.") Her childhood, surrounded by the lavendered spuriousness of family legend, is continued in "Old Mortality". In the same story we see her "immured" in a New Orleans convent and we learn of her elopement. "Pale Horse, Pale Rider"

presents her as a journalist in the World War period. In "Theft" she is a writer in New York, and in "Flowering Judas" she is an American girl who divides her time between school teaching and socialistic activity in the "New" Mexico. In "Hacienda" she is again a writer who attaches herself to a group of Russians in the process of making a film on a pulque plantation.

These are external details in which the time-order is neither clear nor important. They are less illuminating than the psychological insights that go along with them. "Flowering Judas" and "Theft" offer the best indices to the soul-history of Miranda, the meaning of whose name is sufficiently symbolic. In both of these stories the heroine suffers from what Mr. John Crowe Ransom and Mr. Allen Tate have suggested as our *Zeitgeist*: "dissociation of sensibility" and the "locked-in ego":

... she cannot help feeling that she has been betrayed irreparably by the disunion between her way of living and her feeling of what life should be, and at times she is almost contented to rest in this sense of grievance as a private store of consolation.

The heroine of "Flowering Judas" has given herself to abstraction. Her rigidity of purpose is her sword, but ultimately it kills as well as protects. She is wooed by the obese Braggioni, a Revolutionist, and by a Troubadour with scarlet blossoms of the Judas tree in his hair, but her "notorious virginity" is to capitulate neither to the fleshly nor to the romantic symbol:

Her knees cling together under sound blue serge, and her round white collar is not purposely nun-like. She wears the uniform of an idea and has renounced vanities . . . She has encased herself in a set of principles derived from her early training, leaving no detail of gesture or of personal taste untouched. . . .

Her dilemma is stated perfectly in terms of the neglected wife of her most dogged pursuer: "Tonight Laura envies Mrs. Braggioni, who is alone, and free to weep as much as she pleases about a concrete wrong." In sharp contrast to her inability to realize herself is Braggioni, an introvert of a vastly different type, who "loves himself with such tenderness and amplitude and eternal charity that his followers . . . warm themselves in the re-

flected glow, and say to each other: 'He has a real nobility, a love of humanity raised above mere personal affections.'"

Incorporated in a dream comes Laura's final self-accusation of murder and cannibalism, the ultimate sentimentality of which becomes fully apparent when one compares it with the conclusion of "Theft", upon which I have already remarked. In "Theft" Miss Porter uses a simple incident, the theft of the heroine's purse by a janitress, to reveal a fundamental failure in the heroine's character and to explain her tragedy. Between the thief and the owner of the purse she develops a psychological situation of power. From it, however, we are led to a passage of wistful cerebration that might better have been a part of "To the Lighthouse" or "The Years":

She remembered how she had never locked a door in her life, on some principle of rejection in her that made her uncomfortable in the ownership of things, and her paradoxical boast before the warnings of her friends, that she had never lost a penny by theft; and she had been pleased by the bleak humility of this concrete example designed to illustrate and justify a certain fixed, otherwise baseless and general faith which ordered the movements of her life without regard to her will in the matter.

In this moment she felt that she had been robbed of an enormous number of valuable things, whether material or intangible: things lost or broken by her own fault, things she had forgotten and left in houses when she moved: books borrowed from her and not returned, journeys she had planned and had not made, words she had waited to hear spoken to her and had not heard, and the words she had meant to answer with; bitter alternatives and intolerable substitutes worse than nothing, and yet inescapable: the long patient suffering of dying friendships and the dark inexplicable death of love—all that she had had and all that she had missed, were lost together, and were twice lost in this landslide of remembered losses.

This is by no means bad writing. It is even subtle writing. But it is the kind of thing that almost any number of competent people can do.

The conclusion of "Old Mortality" is another evidence of the kind of sentimentality that endangers the author's art—an in-



dulgence of an emotional bias rather than the strict business of telling a "straight story" and giving "true testimony".

### III

The greatest gift of Miss Porter is her consummate mastery of detail. Whatever may be her structural or emotional limitations, she has the uncanny power of evoking richness from minutiae. The gift is manifested everywhere in her work, but no more astonishing bit of observation can be found than in "The Grave", a simple and tremendously powerful little story of two children's contact with the mysteries of life and death. Paul and Miranda have just killed a rabbit:

... Miranda watched admiringly while her brother stripped the skin away as if he were taking off a glove. The flayed flesh emerged dark scarlet, sleek, firm; Miranda with thumb and finger felt the long fine muscles with the silvery flat strips binding them to the joints. Brother lifted the oddly bloated belly. "Look," he said, in a low, amazed voice. "It is going to have young ones."

Very carefully he slit the thin flesh from the center ribs to the flanks, and a scarlet bag appeared. He slit again and pulled the bag open, and there lay a bundle of tiny rabbits, each wrapped in a thin scarlet veil. The brother pulled these off and there they were, dark grey, their sleek wet down lying in minute ripples, over pink skin, like a baby's head just washed; their unbelievably small delicate ears folded close, their little blind faces almost featureless.

Such an evocation of beauty from anatomical detail is not often excelled anywhere in the language. Miss Porter's power to take grossness out of the brutal and the violent is evidenced by her unflinchingly truthful handling of detail in "Magic". Here one is convinced—as, indeed, one should be—that truth has an integrity preserving it eternally from obscenity.

"María Concepcion" is warmly documented with Mexican life, and it glows with the primary colors of primitive art designs. There is, for example, the picture of Juan Villegas, a delicious bit of objective description:

His hat, of unreasonable dimensions and embroidered with silver thread, hung over one eyebrow, secured at the back by



a cord of silver dripping with bright blue tassels. His shirt was of a checkerboard pattern in green and black, his white cotton trousers were bound by a belt of yellow leather tooled in red. His feet were bare, full of stone bruises, and sadly ragged as to toenails. . . . He removed his splendid hat. His black dusty hair, pressed moistly to his forehead, sprang up suddenly in a cloudy thatch on his crown.

An emotional annotation that might easily have been trite is handled with equal deftness. Juan visits María Rosa, his inamorata and mother of his child:

He found her sitting on a clean straw mat, rubbing fat on her three-hour-old son. Before this felicitous vision Juan's emotions so twisted him that he returned to the village and invited every man in the "Death and Resurrection" pulque shop to drink with him.

Details of a completely different sort make "Old Mortality" an excitingly beautiful tapestry. With a few accurate strokes Miss Porter can most successfully evoke the illusion of the past. Detail is used in "Hacienda" for yet another purpose. In fact, here it almost takes precedence over everything else in accomplishing the intent of the story. Miss Porter gives an absorbing panorama of life in contemporary Mexico. With a realistic and unsentimental eye she sees the peons, primitive creatures not many steps removed from animals. She presents with Chekhovian ruthlessness the decadent upper classes: Don Genaro, lover of speed and *chic*; Doña Julia, his wife, who affects the Hollywood Chinese note in costuming and an effete elegance in manner; Betancourt, "Mexican by birth, French-Spanish by blood, French by education . . . completely at the mercy of an ideal of elegance and detachment perpetually at war with a kind of Mexican nationalism which affected him like an inherited weakness of the nervous system."

Mastery of detail assures Miss Porter a high distinction in character delineation. She understands women better than men: the fiercely proud and fiercely tender Mrs. Whipple of "He" and the romantic Irish Rosaleen of "The Cracked Looking Glass" are her high watermarks. But her character studies of men also have authority. One thinks immediately of the journalist of "That

Tree", Mr. Thompson and Holton of "Noon Wine", and the exasperatingly efficient Mr. Kennerly of "Hacienda".

Among her Southern contemporaries in short prose fiction Miss Porter has few peers. She lacks the social emphasis of Mr. Erskine Caldwell, but she also lacks his sensationalism. She has nothing of Mr. William Faulkner's hypnotic quality, his violent power, or his flair for abnormal psychology; but neither has she any of his obliquity. At her best she is superior as a craftsman to both. At any point in her art she is one of the most talented of living American writers.

*by Robert Herridge*

### THE ANSWER

Tonight beneath the hanging slopes of dark,  
The visionary star that poles the north,  
Tracing the torn worlds healing into years,  
The insinuated legend we fail to mark,

Recalled is dusty day. The head is numb  
With sound: careening names as chanted by  
The screeching chorus; the howling antic mobs;  
The message roared in slogans known to thumb.

These ribbon days when hours are hung before  
The eyes on vocal spools, unwinding mouths,  
The parched, bewildered head is slung against  
The needle glare that strings the dulling core.

This prolix year has dungeons for the heart,  
And lulls to self descent that weary derelict.  
And is the muffled voice querulous  
Against the trackless dark? Its pain upstart?

Our desperate youth inquires the northern dancer:  
What argosies are shored? And is the kiss returned?  
The day gives no reply, but in the night  
Stars merge in blood and gather in music answer.

*Modernized*

*by Henry W. Wells*

## THE BOY AT THE TABLE

*A modernized Version of a Translation of STANT PUER AD  
MENSAM Made by John Lydgate, Monk of Bury, in the Early  
Fifteenth Century.*

Dear son, we first of all should find you able  
To bend your heart to virtuous discipline,  
To stand before your master at the table  
And follow all that I advise you in.  
Good breeding must in earliest years begin.  
Speak quietly; let noisy chatter cease;  
Hold feet and hands and fingers all in peace.

Don't make a face or look from side to side,  
Nor peer about nor turn around at all.  
Don't lounge in chairs or spread your legs too wide,  
Nor squirm around and gaze upon the wall.  
Don't pick your nose when dining in the hall.  
This above all be sure to understand:  
Don't scratch your face or body with your hand.

When people speak to you in any place,  
Don't be a sheep with head and eyes hung down,  
But look your speaker quietly in the face.  
Walk demurely through house and town  
With sober countenance and decent gown.  
Don't speak licentiously and never shout—  
At least when either parent is about.

Pare nails; and wash your hands, as it is fit,  
Both before meals and when the meal is done.  
Sit in the place where you are told to sit  
And never try to get a better one.  
And when the lunch or dinner has begun  
But food has not been fully served, don't dig  
Into your plate, lest you be called a pig.

Never grin at meals or wag your head.  
Don't talk too loud, and, in a word, be quiet.  
Don't stuff your mouth with greedy hunks of bread.  
Don't sputter with full cheeks, or you must diet.  
Don't drink too deep or fast, and never riot.  
Keep your lips clean of fat or flesh or fish.  
Don't leave a dirty spoon inside your dish.

Never make clumsy sops of dripping bread.  
Don't suck your soup too loud but sip in peace.  
Don't soil your ale or wine-cup but instead  
Wipe your lips clean from butter, fat or grease.  
Don't soil your napkin or the table-piece.  
Never at meal-time start the slightest strife  
Or try to pick your teeth with any knife.

Be sure your jokes are clean and never rude;  
Don't swear; avoid all reckless ribaldry.  
Don't take the choicest morsels of the food  
All to yourself, but share them courteously.  
Part with your table-fellows modestly;  
Don't load your plate only to eat a snack;  
And carefully keep your nails from getting black.

Of all true courtesy a leading law  
Is not to belch or from old surfeits groan.  
Offend no neighbor with a windy flaw;  
And to your lord all deference be shown.  
Play with no knife, and moderate your tone.  
At lunch or supper-time be still, I beg;  
Don't wriggle to and fro or swing your leg.

Don't stain your vest with pottages or sauce  
And don't put dirty knives upon the table.  
Don't load your spoon but guard its dangerous course  
From cup to lip, as far as you are able.  
Be quick and modest, prompt and serviceable  
And ready at a moment's time to do  
Whatever your superior asks you to.

No matter when or where you dine or sup,  
For manner's sake take salt upon your knife;  
And O, beware of blowing in your cup!  
Honor your neighbors truly all your life;  
As far as possible avoid all strife.  
Don't interrupt after a tale's begun,  
But wait in patience till the story's done.

Don't count upon your fingers while you dine.  
Think above all about your tender age.  
Drink temperately of your ale and wine;  
In language, too, be moderate and sage.  
Await the fitting moment to engage  
In talk, not suddenly too gay or sad,  
Now high with happy news, now low with bad.

The golden mean is best for all who live;  
Young boys, be slow in anger and be kind;  
Eager to fight and eager to forgive,  
The young should never bear a vengeful mind.  
In venerable moralists I find  
That children's anger soon is come and gone;  
An apple makes the combatants at one.

Children will play and battle in a minute;  
Fight at their worst, there's little violence.  
They laugh and cry, and there is nothing in it:  
Don't take them in too dolorous a sense.  
A rod at once reforms their insolence.  
No rancor lingers, for their minds are mild.  
Whoever spares the rod, will spoil the child.

Go, little poem, barren of eloquence,  
And pray young children who may see and read—  
Although there be less rhetoric than sense—  
To give to every clause its proper heed.  
For to all virtues this advice must lead.  
And though the verse is void of grace or state,  
If there is fault in spelling, word or deed,  
Put all the blame upon me, John Lydgate.

*by Carl Edwin Burklund*

## NIGHT

Thick blur of sound, brittle  
vitalities; the endless  
drone of doors; steel  
plucking stone, and the imminent  
peril of tall towers:  
Day, season of disaster.

Night reassumes:  
the soft-  
lipped dusk. . . blue-silver. . . silence,  
and the golden great star singing  
pillar to pillar  
the mind moving  
in meditation and  
memory. . .

Holy  
on hill and the wide sea  
now the night, and to the lips  
peace, and to the heart  
nothing surrendered, nothing  
irretrievably lost.



by Agnes Irene Smith

## E. V. LUCAS

IN these hectic days, when the attitudinizing writer has invaded the pages of even the most conservative of our American magazines, it is a pleasure to find among the L's on the shelf of the public library a half dozen loose-leaved, dog's-eared volumes, essay novels or, as he himself styled them, "entertainments" from the pen of E. V. Lucas. A fashion more than a quarter of a century out of use, and staled by the great publishing houses, he still holds his own in quiet reading rooms, where middle-aged librarians mention him with respect. It is difficult to account for a popularity, moderate though it undoubtedly is, which continues to defy the laws of probability. Lucas, downright Quaker and unswerving democrat that he was, never called to his aid any kind of art to catch the public eye. He never even advertised. Henry James, as in *The Wings of the Dove*, might challenge attention by an all-star cast moving in aristocratic circles; his background might be rich (he himself would have said "stupendous") and his pages no stranger to the risqué situation. E. V. Lucas, on the other hand, introduced middle-class people in ordinary surroundings into books which could be read aloud in mixed company without fear of bringing the blush to the cheek of Podsnap's young person. Everyday objects, such as a mouse, a dog, a cup of tea, a flower seed catalogue, served as inspiration for his essays. The plots of his "entertainments" were negligible. To read him is like fishing in pleasant weather by a quiet stream without catching anything. Yet Henry James remained "poor and lonely" and "insurmountably unsalable" while Lucas, subscribing to half a dozen London clubs, and with wealthy friends in both hemispheres, was involved in no worse financial difficulty than that of how best to dispose of his property after death.

But, though the "sterilized" pages of Lucas are still read, they do not appear to be read by the kind of reader who writes books

about books, and keeps before the public eye the waning popularity that is in danger of being eclipsed by newer literary fashions. Though Lucas edited much and wrote more, being responsible, in all, for about a hundred and twelve books, he seems to have left no finger prints. Eminently readable, he is read without being remembered; unusually quotable, he was never quoted much and seems never to be quoted any more; interested in the problems of wealth and poverty, he has left no solution except the old-fashioned and unpopular one of personal responsibility for one's own well-being; largely preoccupied in his later years with art, he has bequeathed no body of valuable criticism, his rare moments of insight being buried in the shallow minutiae of a commentary adapted to reading aloud from notes by club-women in pursuit of culture. Inevitably, when his well-thumbed and, for the most part, cheaply printed volumes are judged by the librarian to be past mending, they will be replaced by fewer copies and finally by none at all. In view of the present dearth of safe and sane literature to put into the hands of the young, the passing of E. V. Lucas's heaped-up wealth of information, his simple but workable philosophy of life, and his fund of quiet good humor and contentment with common things is much to be deplored.

## II

Edward Verrall Lucas, journalist, editor, rhymester, children's writer, essayist, novelist, publisher's reader, publisher, art critic, traveler, and reputed London wit had in 1910 the reputation of being a "highly mysterious man". He was "the cat that walked by itself". He dodged reporters; avoided literary circles, preferring the society of actors and prize-fighters; frequented the democratic cricket game while resenting the "insulence" of the golfer, "his caste of Vere de Vere"; rode about in shabby old cabs till their disappearance from the London streets compelled him to resort to the taxi; and inevitably, almost in spite of himself, set about securing the wealth and influence he deprecated in others. He was by instinct and religious training a leveler, and, because he was extremely shy, was probably more at ease in the company of his inferiors. Having acquired the status of a kind of literary Veiled Prophet of Khorassan, he seems in later years to have

cherished mystery as an asset. At sixty-four he wrote, "To blurt all is to have no secrets, and secrets are mystery, and mystery is one of the great possessions."

There appears to have been much that was drab and something that was sordid behind the veil. Born in 1868, the second son of Alfred Lucas of Brighton, the boy was ushered into the household of middle-class dissenters, Quakers, who had pushed self-denial and prudence to the point where these virtues become vices. Although they kept four servants, they did the marketing themselves and put everything away under lock and key. The rigor of their economy seems to have left an indelible impression on the mind of Lucas; in an essay, *On Finding Things*, published when he was fifty, probably as a jesting reply to the ridicule of some of his friends, he speaks of the quickened heartbeat with which he pounces on a stray sixpence, a pencil, or a safety pin. At the age of eight, he began to question the scheme of the universe, the first step in his ultimate religious "unbottoming". It seems that he had been almost betrayed into praying for two crippled boys, till, seeing them in a comfortable hospital surrounded by wonderful toys, he realized that they were far more fortunate than he. At ten, as he confesses long years afterward, he stole a pair of boots from his father's closet and sold them to buy a small brass cannon. If we are to accept *The Barber's Clock* as autobiographical (and it dovetails into everything we know of Lucas) the atmosphere of the home was clouded by a monthly row over the bills, a perennial grouch about the income tax, and an annual upheaval whenever school bills were sent in with "extras" for whooping cough or measles—an upheaval which culminated in the child's withdrawal from school altogether. Thereafter he was to be educated at home.

But the youth of Lucas was not altogether overshadowed by the paternal tantrums. His mother, a woman of literary tastes, filled the gap left by the Scottish master at Redhill School, that never-to-be-forgotten master who had secured quiet in his classroom by reading aloud from Shakespeare and Ouida. A kind of Rip van Winkle art-collector, whose swans, in the light of expert criticism, had a way of proving to be geese, and who seems to have been the boy's uncle, gave him companionship, occasional

pocket money, and, most memorable of all, a little bow and arrow. One outing seems to have enlivened these dull years. While staying at a farmhouse one summer, he was taken to a picnic at Hughenden, the country place of the "Prince of Evil, Dizzy, of the dark, long face, bounded on the south by an imperial and on the north by a curl". There were peacocks on the terrace and a hedgehog, which had blundered fortuitously up out of its hole. Then came the hours in the portrait galleries of the great house, the first of many to be spent in later life among the famous art collections both of Europe and of America.

Thrown mainly on his own resources for amusement, the young Lucas spent much of his leisure in memorizing verses from the great poets and from his favorites, Matthew Arnold and William Cory. These he used to recite to himself in a droning sing-song, the protest of the melodiously inclined Quaker against the ban put on music by the founders of his faith. His bleak Sabbaths, or Seventh Days, as the Quakers insist on calling them, were largely devoted to memorizing psalms; and what the classics were in the way of allusion and illustration to Mr. Max Beerbohm and other Oxonians of the period, the Bible became to him. In English, the only language he ever mastered, his reading was wide, ranging through some three centuries from Shakespeare down to his own time. At seventeen, when he caught that memorable glimpse of William Black on the Brighton beach—William Black, then, for a day, the darling of the English speaking people on both sides of the Atlantic—he not only cherished an ambition to write but had acquired a vocabulary rich in the Saxon oak which, in later years, he was to hew and shape in a manner as rapid as it was competent.

And so, from the time when his mother read to him "in that gentle monotone almost the whole of Dickens", he grew to be six feet of sturdy young Quaker, secretly romantic, ambitious to write and to travel, strongly individualistic, at once shy and self-assertive, and, if the truth must be told, of the Epicurean tastes which later were to result in the triple chin and the capacious waistcoat portrayed by Mr. Beerbohm in *Things New and Old*. Religiously, he might be said to have been largely the product of the school of Moody and Sankey, whose evangelistic meetings

left a lasting impression on his memory. The idea of charity, of the brotherhood of man, of service due from the individual to humanity, seems to have obsessed his leisure moments. The most striking poem he has permitted to remain in print treats of charity carried to its logical end—the extinction of the devotee. His experiments in brotherhood, indeed, appear to have been unfortunate, and he was never, even in his youth, the man to pursue a losing game. Superficially good-humored, a delightfully whimsical companion, schooled in the demure half equivocation by which the Quaker is able to convey his sense of the absurdities of life without laying himself open to the charge of undue levity, he had, as the foundation of his character, that “certain powerful and sardonic harshness”, glimpsed by Arnold Bennett, “that awareness that it would be a passing hard task to get change out of him”.

With a tenacity inherited from his dissenting ancestors, Lucas was to cherish the obloquies of his faith long after its tenets had ceased to mean anything to him. Shy as he was, he refused to take oath in court, claiming his right as a Quaker to testify on affirmation. Unaccustomed to the usages of society, he was never at any pains to acquire polish. He came of a sect which had made a point of refusing to uncover in the presence of royalty, and he was firmly convinced that his “betters” did not exist in England. If society came to him on his own terms (as, in the end, it did) well and good; if not, so much the worse for society. Even when he was in his sixties, it was said of him that, if there was a social *faux pas* to be made, he would make it. As an illustration of this last trait may be cited Mr. A. Edward Newton’s account, published in the November *Atlantic* of 1938, of how Lucas, when toasted at a meeting of the Johnson Club, rose and left the table, sending, however, a somewhat equivocal note of apology the next morning. “I could not bear to sit still and hear myself so bepraised—or it might have been the fish.”

Even could the young Lucas have overcome his distrust of the “insulence” of Oxford, a course there, for one lacking Latin, was out of the question. His want of training in mathematics made University College, London, a utilitarian school founded by dissenters, equally impossible. He dropped his course there, what-



ever it was, defeated in the first round, but with the elements of success inherent in him. He was a man who could not digest defeat. In his attitude toward work, he was clean, downright, and unquestioning as an early Victorian tract. His economic views were, and remained, those of the middle-class capitalist. As he later expressed it, he "hated the Trade Union's fixed hours, fixed to please the slacker rather than the worker". He was "appalled by the slovenliness that has come upon us, the tendency to scamp work and to break promises, the craze for recreation". Trained in habits of rigid economy; gifted with unusual business acumen, an unlimited capacity for hard work, and an iron constitution inherited from ancestors who had avoided drink, tobacco, late hours, and ostentation in dress as snares of the devil, he could no more fail in any walk of life which he thought it worth his while to pursue than he could avoid growing rich.

At twenty, when most young men designed for professions are still in scholastic leading strings, Lucas received his first check for literary work. From the time when two weeks as supply on the *Sussex Daily News* gave him a foothold, he was, like his model Hazlitt, "steeped in ink". At twenty-four he was already in London on the staff of the *Globe*; three years later he was on that of the *Academy* without relinquishing his connection with the *Globe*. In what might have been his leisure hours, he busied himself in compiling to please the Quaker palate two rather large volumes consisting of collections of letters strung together by a trickle of biography; bringing out at the age of twenty-five *Bernard Barton and His Friends*; at thirty, *Charles Lamb and the Lloyds*, a publication which obtained for him the commission from Methuen & Co. to prepare for the press *The Life and Letters of Charles Lamb*. This truly monumental work, which he finished at the age of thirty-seven, opened up for him a new market on this side of the Atlantic, a market which he somewhat too busily endeavored to fill while taking up additional duties as a member of the editorial staff of *Punch*. This position he held at the time of his death in 1938, together with the chairmanship of the house of Methuen & Co.

His fecundity was amazing. From 1903 to 1927 there was no year in which he did not publish a book, usually two, and often



three or four. In the same year in which *The Life and Letters of Charles Lamb* appeared with its elaborate and scholarly index, he published *A Wanderer in Holland*. The previous year he had produced *Highways and Byways in Sussex*. In his late twenties or his early thirties he had somehow found time to marry and to write a volume of essays called *Domesticities*, most of which, like his first volume of poems, he later suppressed. There is a record of a book, *What Shall We Do Now?* in which he collaborated with Mrs. Lucas, and his home life, like Browning's Italian dwelling house, which an earthquake revealed to be pretty much all shop, must have been more or less strictly devoted to business.

It has been said that Lucas cherished a deep and abiding sense of the brotherhood of man, an impulse to give that was held in check only by his keen realization of the futility of pouring costly liquids into leaky vessels. Having early arrived at the conclusion that the greatest happiness is to be found in an absorbing interest in work, coupled with a love of innocent and educative pleasures, he seems to have consciously set about showing the poor how to make life not only tolerable but pleasant, rich in the cultural opportunities that lie open to all. He sings the praises of the cricket field, the music hall, the zoölogical garden, the art museum, the curious book, the vacation in the tramp steamer, and, above all, the treasures of architectural beauty and of historic interest that challenge the attention of the loiterer in the street. His gift to charity was unique; he unveiled a world of ever-increasing pleasure to be enjoyed by the poorest in return for the effort of opening the eyes. Lucas was an enthusiast rather than a critic; his usual method was to display a work of art for a moment in the warm light of his own appreciation, and then to pass on to the next—and the next, with apparently inexhaustible superlatives. He had, no doubt, a touch of the smugness of the average citizen in the contemplation of the costly and hideous, but, after all, his kind of comment is more productive of interest in art than the blight often cast upon budding enthusiasm by the able criticism of Mr. Max Beerbohm.

Lucas has said of Murillo that he painted for the poor. With no ambitious eye on posterity, with no sidelong glance at the social ladder, he himself wrote frankly for the man in the street.

Music halls, not opera; cricket, not golf. Is poverty a bar to a flower garden? There is the seedsman's catalogue! Are you too poor to own a dog? Would you, by chance, consider a mouse? Those superannuated omnibuses, gaily painted and set up on stilts in the coastal marshes, cheap and gaudy imitations of the seaside villa which affected Mr. Beerbohm with a distaste amounting to nausea, how these would have delighted the heart of Lucas! For years, when he was free to go and come, he lived at Sparks Haw, Froghole. The force of democracy could no further go.

But Murillo's paintings came to be the exclusive property of the rich, and, just as the model tenement block is always preëmpted by the prosperous as soon as erected, so Lucas, ironically enough, became the property of the well-to-do Quaker and the exclusive Congregationalist. To persons of the leisured class who are denied, through age, invalidism, or lack of funds, the delights of travel, there can be no pleasanter "adventure" (in the Lucasian sense of the word) than an extended course of this most unaffected of essayists. One should not read him alone any more than one should travel alone. His English was designed, as the writer has been at pains to hint, for reading aloud. His humor, sly as the twinkle of an eye half-hid under the broad brim of a Quaker hat, is more or less lost on the silent reader. But, imbibed through oral channels and well digested, it becomes a household word. You soon begin to allude to your much-married neighbor as a "widow three-deep", a blundering puppy is "an absurd creature with one foot in the cradle", the town bore is "a great performer on the monologue", ministers whose theology you dislike are "trimming God to their own dimensions", and you endeavor to train your rose "nose-high". Your good humor and your contentment with life grow with your growing interest in common things, and, as the "adventure" draws to a close, you will probably enjoy a clearer conception of London and pastoral England than if personally conducted by any other than E. V. Lucas.

The novels of Lucas appear to be the most popular of his essays, having, as they do, a slender plot to sustain interest, and usually containing a good deal of out-of-the-way information, together with some amusing character drawing. By the

riotous Jack Cades of our own period they might be termed feloniously small beer, but to the few milk-fed adolescents our country affords, they fizz with the unaccustomed wickedness of ice cream soda. What safer ideal for a girl to cherish in her teens than the young American "sin buster" in *Genevra's Money*? Advisory Ben and Anne Ingleside are especially calculated to stimulate the ambitions of the American girl, for these Lucasian heroines are of the type of modern womanhood who direct their fresh and abundant energies into the channels of profitable and interesting work. No adult lover of the well-written and quietly persuasive will be disappointed in *Advisory Ben*, *Mr. Ingleside*, *London Lavender*, *Over Bemertons*, or *Genevra's Money*. These, as the habit grows, will be followed by the essays, *Fireside and Sunshine* (one of the first and freshest of his collections), *Specially Selected*, *Adventures and Enthusiasms*, *Giving and Receiving*, and *Loiterer's Harvest*. One of the most fascinating of biographies is *The Life and Letters of Charles Lamb*. Though Lucas lacks the critical insight and the dramatic instinct of Strachey and Maurois, still, to the loiterer in literary by-ways, his work is all the more charming because of its very leisureliness, which adapts it to desultory reading over a long period of time. Of the *Wanderer* series, *A Wanderer in London* is, in my opinion, the best, both because of the author's being on familiar ground and because of his greater discursiveness. In this "adventure" the children must not be forgotten, and *The Slowcoach*, with its background of pastoral England, will delight both old and young.

### III

I am inclined to think with Dogberry that "comparisons are odorous". To one fresh from the Lucasian adventure, a whisper that Lucas is in any way inferior to those two great contemporary rivals in his field, Mr. Max Beerbohm and Mr. Logan Pearsall Smith, is likely to act as a damper on what is, doubtless, a very natural preference. But Lucas, though invaluable in the family gathering as he is in the sick room, has his limitations. The fact that he was a self-made man, whereas Mr. Beerbohm and Mr. Smith are scholars and men of leisure, is beside the point. Lucas was not the output of mass production; he had the advantage of

an opportunity to develop himself along original lines. The fact that he observed the world without too many preconceived ideas about what he was expected to think should have given to his criticism of life and art a unique value. But that was not the case. One reason why he might be considered inferior to these other two is that, whereas he thought little and wrote much, they thought much and wrote little. He did not make the most of his material. All but a few of the best of his essays are like lively preliminary sketches of some more detailed work to follow. The added richness which long reflection gives, detail by slow detail, is seldom theirs.

It was not for lack of understanding of the process whereby a writer enriches, rounds out, and polishes his work that Lucas produced, for the most part, essays so attenuated. In his *Life and Letters of Charles Lamb* he has taken the pains to illustrate and to analyze the method of Elia. The fact was that he disliked Lamb's style, and, as to elaboration of his subjects, he had tried that in his youth with no great degree of success; it was a sore spot with him. His sense of business values, too, rejected the uneconomical methods of *Elia*, this little, weazened, dawdling, eccentric "amateur", frittering away time worth pounds, shillings, and pence, with printers' devils clamoring at his door for copy which no pecuniary inducement could persuade him to begin—or, having begun, to finish. He reserved his admiration for Hazlitt. "To try to write like Lamb," he assures us, "is perhaps the surest road to literary disaster; to try to write like Hazlitt is one of the best things a young man can do." But here again he falls short. Whereas Hazlitt thought much and read little, Lucas thought little and read much. Under the spur of the time limit, his method was to develop his subject along simple and economical lines and then stop when his time was up. What he wrote was new wine, thrown on the market without any of the mellowing that comes with age.

If with Lucas authorship was more or less of a rapid and mechanical process, with Mr. Beerbohm it was the work of silence and slow time. So unready was he, even in stereotyped forms of composition, that he confesses to miserable failure as the secretary of his brother, Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree. "To seem to write

with ease and delight", he explains, "is one of the duties which a writer owes to his art. And to contrive that effect involves very great skill and care." In selecting essays for republication in book form, he is not only fastidious in his choice, but is loath to send any of "these little creatures" out into the world again without great "scrutiny and titivation". Such fond lingering touches, bespeaking the very sublimation of literary parenthood, seem to be quite outside the method of Lucas, and they produced essays which, if in the outset somewhat dandiacal, yet seem to sparkle with a vitality all their own. The best work of Mr. Smith, too, has perhaps even more the air of being the product of natural development rather than of deliberate planning. It has the asymmetry of a lush growth sprung from that heap of incredibly rich compost of past ages which constitutes his mind. Even the dry philological treatise, in his hands, seems to be not so much organized as organic, to develop according to natural law, as roots follow a drain.

Not only was Lucas, for the most part, too rapid and mechanical in his method, but he approached his art with a reservation which no writer can afford to make, the reservation of his private life. The biographer in search of material has a dry and thankless task in reading his familiar essays, to say nothing of the rest of his work. Thoroughgoing artists, to quote Mr. Smith, "must have models, they must live on the living and often, like Tolstoy and Scott and Dickens, they may be counted as members of those tribes who cook and eat their own parents." In the case of Mr. Beerbohm, a tragedy which touched him more nearly perhaps than could any other has brought out his most gently humorous and wholly delightful essay, *From a Brother's Standpoint*. Mr. Smith, for his part, appears to have no reservations whatever. The casual air with which he pegs down his nearest and dearest for vivisection and demonstration is to be equaled only by the engaging candor with which he himself steps forward to serve as his own guinea pig. But Lucas was shy; "so shy," he wrote, "that I can be daunted by the smile of a perfect stranger in the street—and he thinking of something else." He suppressed his early volume of poems and some of his early and probably self-revealing essays. In his "entertainments" he suppressed all but the super-



ficial characteristics of the persons in his stories. He subjected them to none of the stresses which stir human nature to its depths. In short, he suppressed all of himself but the easy, entertaining, informational Lucas.

Generalizations, like boomerangs, often return to plague their author, but I venture the assertion that a writer is always unfortunate in having a Puritanical audience, readers strict in point of the proprieties but not overnice in matters of art. Let it be admitted that the Elizabethan audience, as Mr. Smith has pointed out, produced but one Shakespeare; and that, on the other hand, the unlettered servingmaids of eighteenth century London stimulated Richardson to the production of a series of psychological studies which found imitators on the continent, and which are still capable of engrossing the minds of scholars. But, take it by and large, a writer must ask permission of his audience to be great; he lives up to their expectations—or down to them. Mr. Beerbohm wrote for the perusal of scholars and critics; he was forced not only to make his strokes tell but to polish his rapier and to fence with the grace and abandon which alone can win the applause of experts. Mr. Smith professes to write to please himself, an able critic with abundant leisure for the task. "When," he writes in *Afterthoughts*, "by sips of champagne and a few oysters they can no longer keep me from fading away into the infinite azure, 'you cannot', I shall whisper my last faint message to the world, 'be too fastidious'." At the outset of his career Lucas accepted without question the standards of the Victorian dissenters of whom he was one. These standards demanded of a writer that he should be preferably placid and pleasant, and undoubtedly "proper"; and that, in order to conserve time, he should convey information. Now the informational essay, of the popular sort, being by far the easiest thing an author can do, is apt to be habit forming. Lucas became an addict. With the passing of time, his output took on more and more of the stenographic quality of notes jotted down on the spot, transcribed, and sent to the press without further alteration. At its best, his style was lucid and pleasing, so free from mannerisms that that incorrigible mimic, Max Beerbohm, never, so far as I know, attempted to make it the subject of caricature. At its worst, it might be mistaken for



the style of a school girl. The following stereotyped enthusiasms, quoted from his *Leonardo da Vinci*, may serve to illustrate: "the glorious equestrian statue", "the delicious little boy with a dolphin", "a marvel never to be repeated", "the lovely central spire", "one of the most wonderful careers in the history of mankind". This is criticism reduced to its lowest terms, intellectual deadlock.

It is possible that Lucas was less abundantly gifted by nature than the other two. The precocious artistry, the almost uncanny critical insight, and the Puckish freaks of fancy which characterize Mr. Beerbohm put him in a class by himself, while Mr. Smith, for all the incredible awkwardness of some of his passages, is able to wing his way in a pure serene where Lucas cannot follow. But, after all, it was probably by choice that he was more of an artisan than of an artist. To him it was enough that a thing should be neatly joined and smoothly finished—as Arnold Bennett puts it, "serenely well done". Perhaps, to his Quaker taste, everything beyond the utmost economy and simplicity of treatment savored of the rococo. Luther-like, he would have hurled Mr. Smith's "purple inkpot" in the face of any Devil who had prompted him to use it. From a business point of view, he was right: his writing gave him a comfortable living, whereas Mr. Smith's comfortable living gives him leisure to write.

The question of the immortality of these three rests on the knees of the gods. If we are able to believe some of the recent rose-hued press notices of Mr. Smith, he will be hailed by future generations with delight, but then critics were saying of Mr. Beerbohm and of Lucas in the dawn of the twentieth century what they are now saying of Mr. Smith. In respect to Mr. Beerbohm, he is a slender classic, bearing indeed a kind of resemblance to his own "Savonarola" Brown, who, after seven years' devotion to the composition of a tragedy in blank verse, died with only the first act completed. But he is, in my opinion, essential to any study of the literature of his time both because of the validity of his criticism and of the fact that he is in the main stream with Hardy, James, Shaw, and the rest. As long as Swinburne and Whistler are remembered, essays like *No. 2, The Pines* will be read. In any case, he deserves at least as much space in the library cat-

alogues of 1992 as he prophesied for himself in his inimitable story of *Enoch Soames*.

Mr. Smith is another matter, a century plant of a man who has burst into curious and highly colored inflorescence after nearly sixty years of leisurely development. Sad if his "fine writing" should disappear without imitators, his silver cadences die away without an echo. But he is not in the main stream—in the backwaters rather, and we predict for him that, in ages to come, he will be occasionally re-discovered by readers of discrimination, and enthusiastically brought before the public as he himself has brought Taylor and Donne.

As to Lucas, he might almost be said to be in a stream by himself. He reflects no tendency; he exemplifies no trend of thought. In a day of ever increasing subtlety and license in the portrayal of human passions, he continued to regard the creatures of his imagination as superficial acquaintances. He needs some one to do for him what he has neglected to do for himself, to pick out for preservation, from the mass of floating debris he has left behind him, the things he wrote when he lost himself, forgetting that he was losing time and money. Yet, since the kind of reader who likes him best often finds it difficult to orient himself in any time but his own, I am inclined to believe that in the future Lucas will be known only to a few widely read scholars, and classed as one of those second- or third-rate essayists who, like Southey and Cowley, afford pleasanter reading than their superiors. Yet, whatever the fate of his essays, what a gold mine his *Wanderer* series, should it survive our modern methods of warfare, would prove to the antiquary of the year 2939!

#### IV

"But art in a writer", says Mr. Beerbohm, "is not everything—... writers of enormous vitality never are artistic." And it must be said that, beside Mr. Beerbohm, the self-confessed "*dilettante*" and "*petit maitre*", as beside Mr. Smith, the leisurely etcher of finely pointed aphorisms, Lucas looms up, a titanic figure. "What an excellent golf player Sir Willoughby Patterne would have made!" he cries contemptuously, and walks off to hobnob with the Booths at Salvation Army headquarters. He cares nothing

for scroll borders and shell patterns; he secures his effects by large, economical, and masterly strokes. His ever recurring theme is that in work lies the redemption of the world—work, work, and then more work. In his reverence for work lies the secret of the Pharisaical stone he flung in *A Wanderer in London* at "A Lost Girl with a Sweet Face." The last stanza may have been softened by a touch of pity, but his judgment is not affected. She refused the advice of her elders, and look at her now! Why didn't she get a job? "Happiness", he says in *The Barber's Clock*, which seems to embody his final conclusions about life, "or the human approximation to happiness comes from having a little too much to do."

Facile criticism might be tempted to regard Lucas as the slave of a hopper which ground out faster than he could pour in; to regret that he never enjoyed the leisure to round out, retouch, perfect his work. If he had had that leisure, he would probably not have so employed it. Like the fresco painter, he made his strokes once for all. And how good many of these strokes were! What is struck off in the heat of conversation by a Johnson, a Whistler, or a Shaw needs no revision, and Lucas was his own Boswell, recording day by day the movements of an unusual mind. The vocabulary he employed was the simplest to be found for his purpose; he wished to be understood rather than admired, and he hated literary dandyism. If his essays and novels were cheaply printed, he knew that books were made to be read, not looked at. He did more than his share of the work of the world, and he acknowledged no criterion but his own conscience. Refusing to pander to what he must have regarded as a depraved taste, he did his utmost to cultivate in his readers the virtues of industry, purity, serenity, and open-mindedness. It can hardly be said that he left the verdict to posterity; he himself, in a model epitaph, has already pronounced it.

Here Lies  
(In No Expectation of Immortality)  
Thomas Brown  
He Was No Friend of the Church  
But He Paid His Way  
Interfering with None of His Neighbors  
And His Word Was His Bond

*by Ralph Gustafson*

## APRIL ECLOGUE

*A London Street at Dusk*  
*The Poet sits on the tenement steps*  
*The Man leans on the paling of the area*

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POET:     The dusk licks up the gutter  
              With a dusty tongue  
              And the smell of oil parades  
              The air.

MAN:     Twice has the postman knocked  
              And no one home  
              Paralleled to a rusty number  
              On an empty street  
              And no one there.

POET:     The tongue of the dusk  
              And the tongue of the door  
              Stuffed with the past  
              Letter jammed at potential end and  
              Out of date  
              Litter waiting the currying fingers  
              Of beggars  
              Refuse the nostrils refuse  
              And none to care  
              Letter and  
              Litter

MAN:     Too many tins and traffic in street  
              Too little time to make life sweet.

POET: (*Staring between his knees*)  
Twenty feet under  
Through worms and pipes  
Fourteen more than death demands  
Shuttling the warp of time  
The traffic runs.

MAN: It shakes the water in the jug,  
Beneath the house. My wife  
Can't sleep.

POET: Bed her on sleepers  
Of the Transport Board  
Bed her on down  
You can't afford.

MAN: It's April—and a man  
Must find it out by calendar.

POET: One can get to April underground,  
The air is pumped and science has purloined  
The sun to light the populace to parks.  
There spring is prisoned in an iron gate  
For your delight and you may question April  
Hungry on a bench and place your litter  
For the gardener to collect Oh to be  
In April now that England's there

An April to remember

MAN: It might almost be December—  
But for fog

POET: By December there'll be war  
This is April  
Could you wish for more?

MAN: (*Knocking his pipe on the paling*)  
Well, Mamie'll soon be home

POET:     Wherever you may roam

          Though there's words for the needy  
          And hope for the slum  
          Wherever you build it  
          There's no place for home.

          By the stars you cannot constellate  
          By the swelling volute of the clock  
          Dusk is done  
          Much to be done and  
          No one to do it

MAN:     I must put the kettle on.  
          Mamie should be home

POET:     The heart of the world  
          Mamie in the heart of the world  
          In a traffic-jam  
          Jam for tea  
          And no one to eat it  
          The presage of feet on the pavement  
          Leaving no print in time  
          The right to be left  
          Right left  
          In pairs  
          One is Mamie's  
          Who cares  
          Who cares?

MAN:     I must go now  
          I must put the kettle on  
          Mamie should be come

POET:     Let love put the kettle on  
          Let love be the one  
          Who else is there to carry on  
          But one?



MAN: Well, good-night  
I must go now (*He exits r.*)

POET: Lust licks up the litter  
With a desperate tongue  
And the smell of love pervades  
The air.

*by Ralph Gustafson*

### THINK THIS NO FOLLY

Think this no folly  
That I prove  
For we too pledged each lovely  
Thing our love,

Assumed the symbol  
Of the sea,  
Have made the constant moon  
A simile.

O think not these  
A day define,  
Nor that, nor any beauty,  
Anodyne.

The tyrant sun  
In this is thief,  
No less, the silver moon  
Who rifles grief.

Think only this:  
When grief shall be  
Lo, sun is fickle, moon  
A mockery.

*by Ralph Gustafson*

## TOPONYMY

Lens and line  
Across the map deploy,  
Sight cornerstones  
Of man and boy.

Between, where Oder  
And the Danube run,  
Are acres adequate  
For every son—

Soil enough  
For geography and death  
Who requisitions but  
A shoulder's-breadth

For one or more.  
He will not leave it less  
Who lays a boundary  
With bone and flesh—

Boundary bone  
Plus loyal loin and lip—  
Proof determinate  
Of final map.

Have plummet point,  
Let civil eye survey  
The fatal length of limb  
The coign of clay;

Determine where  
This loyalty shall lie—  
Within, without whatever  
Field, what sky.

*by Ralph Gustafson*

## CRISIS

Cherish them now for they shall not be yours:  
The lathe pressing to the hardwood maple's heart  
The whetstone and the standing corn  
The single thought.

You shall harvest and the moths will circle in the moon  
And you shall work a work still with your hand  
But you shall say this harvest's bitter  
The fingers blunt.

And the wind shall be sickly in Annapolis,  
On the Massawippi water: truth  
Shall be sour on the mouth of poets  
And the lover's mouth

For death is on the Elbe and as a sign  
The critical water flows against the hill:  
Kootenay shall read the Elbe,  
And Skagway and Belle Isle.

The stolid labour at the sunburnt husking  
The annihilating hands of lovers and the short  
Laugh the coward dark of cupboards  
Shall find you out.

The ploughland shall be furrowed then with haste  
Your cities shall reap greed and there will be  
Smoke above the wall and no  
Word to say.

For the word in our time has become barren and the deed  
And the closing of a gate, we no longer have,  
A friendly door against the silent  
Night and love.

*by Ralph Gustafson*

## FINAL SPRING

Of grass, insurgent bud aware,  
We in the loop of sudden spring,  
Trammelled by tangled green and song  
Nostalgic on the ear,  
Thrown by the lariat of sun  
Are branded with initialled fear.

Between the brazen daffodil  
Sprawling headlines through the park  
Between the question on the wind,  
On lintels of the hill,  
And storage in the hollow tree  
Joy adds a hasty codicil.

For we are the muscled living, therefore  
Make a hasty signature,  
Dispossess the urgent root  
Certify the heir:  
Fear, in the framework of the wind,  
This, and the threat of fear, and fear.

*by Ralph Gustafson*

## SUMMER GARDEN

Near noon and the heavy trees  
Heavy with sun  
Make cool a little space  
The heart's shadows  
And their own.

They are not silent these  
Cool places and the heart.  
But whistled by liquid birds  
The tree's green  
And the hurt.

And men of separate fear  
Forgetful sit  
And watch the river trippers  
Ranged in rows  
Forget.

And I too sit, and name  
Myself more real  
Than song and shadow and what  
The others do  
Not tell.

*by Ralph Gustafson*

## THIS SPEAKING WERE ENOUGH

This speaking were enough  
If words were true—  
And every action its own end  
That compassed you.

I would not need the grace  
Of more than this,  
To say 'I love'—and then have done  
With emphasis.

To tell in other terms  
What I have told—  
Predict the gold or silver moon  
As silver? gold?

I could protest again  
And it would be  
That I should measure north and south  
My apogee.

But I have need, oh I  
Have need of more—  
Than synonym of love and love,  
Before, before,

Who know this traffic false  
The telling cheat,  
And every word before the saying,  
Obsolete.



by Norman A. Brittin

## STEFAN ZWEIG:

### BIOGRAPHER AND TEACHER

**B**IOGRAPHY, in common with all other literary *genres*, has moved steadily from the exterior to the interior; from the chronicling of recorded acts to the interpretation of inner motives. Seldom does the contemporary biographer produce the formless, multi-volume, Victorian affair entitled *The Life and Times of John Doe*; instead, he produces, at dismayingly frequent intervals, an artfully constructed, streamlined work entitled *John Doe, the Man*. For in our time it was rediscovered, as Claude M. Fuess once pointed out, that man "is, in one respect at least, like an iceberg. Only about one fifth of him is actually visible. The remainder is concealed beneath the surface." Having recognized the importance of this rediscovery, many biographers plunged boldly—some would say rashly—beneath the surface, proceeding to chart with the instruments of modern psychology, the concealed contours of that dark, mysterious, drifting bulk which, it seemed, often contrasted abruptly with the crystal pinnacles projecting for all the world to see. Among contemporary biographers none has shown himself more assiduous in that tantalizing enterprise than Stefan Zweig.

As a biographer, Zweig is unusual; but he is more than a biographer: he is a teacher. And since he is now advertised as "the most translated of living authors", a consideration of his ideas and methods has some significance. In this exposition his recent popular biographies of Marie Antoinette and Mary Stuart may be neglected, for he reveals himself more clearly in his other work.

Until the World War upset him, Zweig was a traveller and a man of letters, not a biographer. He wrote verse, short stories, and literary criticism. He became a friend and disciple of the Belgian poet Verhaeren, whose work he translated and interpreted.

A pacifist during the War, he associated himself with Romain Rolland in Switzerland, and from Rolland received an enduring inspiration for his life and work. The nature of his debt to Rolland may be gathered from *ROMAIN ROLLAND: THE MAN AND HIS WORK*, his adulatory interpretation of the great Frenchman which appeared in 1921.

Rolland's steadfastness put younger men to shame. In his company we were stronger, freer, more genuine, more unprejudiced. Human lovingkindness, transfigured by his ardor, radiated like a flame. . . . We were but a couple of dozen who thus came together in Switzerland: Frenchmen, Germans, Russians, Austrians, and Italians. We few were the only ones among the hundreds of millions who could look one another in the face without hatred, exchanging our innermost thoughts. This little group was all that then constituted Europe.

After the War, Zweig retired to Salzburg, where, an intellectual in arms against a world of force, he proceeded to carry out a planned literary program. For, as befits a disciple of Verhaeren and Rolland, Zweig is an idealist, a lover of creativity, a humanitarian, an internationalist, an ardent supporter of free conscience, and a stubborn opponent of all that blocks man's development, of all that breaks bonds of brotherhood, leading men to hatred, of all that coerces the spirit. This exaltation for spiritual independence, fired by Rolland's example, provided Zweig with the purpose which informs most of his work.

This purpose is dramatically to revive for the present world the personalities of men and women who have contributed to the body of belief which is ours; to explain, through the form of interpretive biography, how man, symbolized in typical examples, has handled the recalcitrant world into which he was born, or how that world has handled him; to explain what patterns man has made "of the amazing kaleidoscope presented to him by life." Though Zweig constantly engages in psychological analysis, his biographies have a strong ethical basis, unusual in our age of "debunkery", so that he deserves more, perhaps, the title of spiritual biographer than that of psychological biographer.

Zweig's ambitious series entitled *MASTER BUILDERS: AN AT-*

TEMPT AT THE TYPOLOGY OF THE SPIRIT so far includes four volumes, which I list in the order of their publication in German:

THREE MASTERS: Balzac, Dickens, Dostoevsky, 1919

THE STRUGGLE WITH THE DAIMON: Hölderlin, Kleist, Nietzsche, 1925

ADEPTS IN SELF-PORTRAITURE: Casanova, Stendhal, Tolstoy, 1928

MENTAL HEALERS: Mesmer, Mrs. Eddy, Freud, 1931

At least one more volume, a trilogy on *Three Women*, will later take its place in the series. Zweig explained his intention in the introduction to ADEPTS IN SELF-PORTRAITURE:

I am trying to analyze the distinctive types of the creative will, and to illustrate these various types by a description of personalities characteristic of each. . . . *The Struggle with the Daimon* showed Hölderlin, Kleist, and Nietzsche as so many variants of the tragic personality driven onward by elemental urges. . . —of the temperament which, in its movement towards the infinite, strides over itself and over the outer world. *Three Masters* contemplated Balzac, Dickens, and Dostoevsky as types of epic world-shapers who in the cosmos of their novels create a second reality side by side with the real world known to us all. *Adepts in Self-Portraiture* takes us along a road which leads . . . back into itself. For the adept in self-portraiture, the aim is to disclose the microcosm of his own ego, rather than to depict the macrocosm, the plenitude of existence.

Thus in his series of MASTER BUILDERS Zweig is not biographer *pur sang* but rather, a special blend of psychologist and historian of culture, interested less in his subjects for themselves than in certain types of character which, in his view, they represent. He is most successful, I believe, in his studies of Dostoevsky, Hölderlin, and Stendhal, where, such is the force of his imaginative reconstruction, he seems practically to identify himself with the inner lives of the men he represents.

I speak, properly, I believe, of the force of his imaginative reconstruction. For biography is an art; and we should not be misled by Zweig's solemn terminology into thinking that his work is more "scientific" than that of any other biographer. Psychology, as a science, must deal with living people. Dealing with sub-

jects out of the past, Zweig is employing the deductive method upon material which does not lend itself to any experimental check of his results. As an anthropologist might pick members of a class to illustrate such human types as the Mediterranean, the Nordic, and the Alpine, so Zweig tries to show, by use of typical examples (but according to his own conception of the types) certain kinds of personalities that have been creative.

Zweig's work in *MASTER BUILDERS* resembles that of Gamaliel Bradford. His studies are not intended as full-length biographies: "my essays are not meant as an introduction but as a sublimation, a condensation, an essence." The whole series is a group of "psychographs"—those soul-portraits, studies of the essential personality, which Bradford was at so much pains to perfect. Like Bradford, too, Zweig usually writes out of admiration.

His great emphasis upon some single characteristic, which enables him to group his subjects according to types, reminds one of the *Comedy of Humors*, and his fondness for the general as against the particular makes his *MASTER BUILDERS*, in comparison with most biography, seem overly schematized. In fact, this endeavor to "type" his subjects persists throughout most of Zweig's work.

We gain further understanding of his purposes from his introduction to *MENTAL HEALERS*:

My only desire is to portray ideas as embodied in certain human lives. A thought grows in a man's brain, and then leaps from this man to invade the whole world. It seems to me that such a spiritual happening makes the idea more concretely intelligible than could any formal or detailed history of its origin and spread....

For my part, I am inclined to look upon this expulsion of certain masters of healing from the ranks of academic medicine as one of the most interesting episodes in the history of civilization. Nothing is to be compared to the dramatic power which is to be witnessed when one puny and isolated human being sets himself in opposition to a world-embracing organization.

This last sentence expresses Zweig's favorite theme: the struggle for independence of the one against the overbearing many. This was the theme of Rolland's life:

the miracle of one man's keeping his senses amid the frenzied millions, of one man's remaining free amid the universal slavery of public opinion. . . . Love at war with hate, the European at war with the patriots, conscience at war with the world.

Not only does this theme dominate the careers of Rolland, Mesmer, Mrs. Eddy, and Freud, but it is also evident in *ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM* and *THE RIGHT TO HERESY*, which, with its subtitle *CASTELLIO AGAINST CALVIN*, is particularly significant for interpretation of Zweig's ideas and methods.

Sebastian Castellio, Swiss humanist and perhaps the most learned man of his time, was another Rolland, though lacking Rolland's fame: the only man in Europe who dared attack John Calvin, theocrat of Geneva, when Calvin, leader of those who had originally declared for liberty of interpretation, illegally caused Miguel Servetus to be burned at the stake for heresy.

Here was a man who, during one of those periods of collective insanity with which the world is from time to time afflicted, dared to keep his mind free from popular hallucinations, and to designate by their true name of murder the slaughterings which purported to be made for the greater glory of God.

Castellio it was who "thundered the imperishable utterance, 'to burn a man alive does not defend a doctrine, but slays a man'." On the physical plane Castellio did not triumph—did not overthrow Calvin, did not establish his ideal of toleration. Indeed, he was persecuted by the fanatical Genevese; his works were known to very few, for Calvin's heavy censorship stifled them; and Castellio himself, facing trial for heresy, escaped probable death at the stake only through merciful heart-failure. It is an old story: whether a century before Milton, or nearly three centuries after Milton, men like Castellio, Rolland, Thomas Mann,

Men whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent,  
Would have been held in high esteem with Paul  
Must now be named and printed heretics . . .

But Castellio's books enjoyed "a life beyond life". Fifty years after his death, Dutch liberals resisting Calvinist theocracy had his works reprinted, and they furnished ammunition to Arminius.

In Zweig's view, man at his best is the instrument of the ideal;

and though man's body perish and his name be reviled, yet the ideal is timeless.

Hence, he declares, we must never cease to remind a world which has eyes only for monuments to conquerors that the true heroes of our race not those who reach their transitory realms across hecatombs of corpses, but those who, lacking power to resist, succumb to superior force—as Castellio was overpowered by Calvin in his struggle for the freedom of the spirit and for the ultimate establishment of the kingdom of humaneness upon earth.

Zweig, then, is a tireless warrior in the cause of individualism and in the cause of toleration, which alone can make individualism possible. He is more than a biographer; he is an ethical leader; and *THE RIGHT TO HERESY*, though in it no person of our day is mentioned, is one of the finest tracts for the times that have recently been published.

*ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM* is a companion piece of *THE RIGHT TO HERESY*. The life of Erasmus Zweig considers "a meagre subject for a biographer". But Erasmus as a symbol of the humanistic ideal is highly significant, for he was, Zweig asserts,

of all the writers and creators in the West, the first conscious European, the first to fight on behalf of peace, the ablest champion of the humanities and of a spiritual ideal.

More than any other method Zweig favors the method of antithesis; and just as *THE RIGHT TO HERESY* is concentrated by the symbolic opposition of Castellio and Calvin, so, in *ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM*, a chapter in the history of thought is made vivid by the dramatic antithesis of Erasmus and Luther—Erasmus the urbane, like "lucent syrops tinct with cinnamon", and Luther the fanatic, like "thunder, winged with red lightning and impetuous rage". The old story is repeated: the man of action has his way; the intellectual's voice, inept at emotional appeals, is lost in the blare of trumpets. But the ideal remains to challenge the twentieth century no less than the sixteenth.

In an article on Emil Ludwig, Zweig writes:

Because he had suddenly attained the vision appropriate to the perception of significant problems, he saw that it was important to display the essential forms of the spiritual lead-



er to an epoch that had met tragedy through the personal defects of its outstanding statesmen.

This statement may be applied more effectively to Zweig himself than to Ludwig. But the gloomier aspect of the problem of leadership cannot be ignored. For history, Zweig declares, "neither punishes evil nor rewards good. Since it is based, not upon right, but upon might, it usually assigns victory to men of might." Recognizing this fact, Zweig was not content to show the age spiritual distrust. Thus his *JOSEPH FOUCHÉ: THE PORTRAIT OF A POLITICIAN* is the obverse of his more positive work. In the introduction he announces:

If it be true, as Napoleon declared more than a century ago, that politics must be regarded as 'la fatalité moderne', as the new impersonation of destiny, then in self-defence we must try to recognize the men who are the makers of this 'fatality' and thus to unriddle the perilous mystery of their power. This biography of Joseph Fouché is a contribution to the typology of the politician.

Zweig calls Fouché "the most remarkable politician the world has ever known"; and certainly Fouché had an amazing career. Trust Zweig to make the most of Fouché's melodramatic mutations!

It is hard to realize, he says, that one and the same individual, a man with the same skin and hair, was in 1790 a priestly schoolmaster, and by 1792 already a plunderer of the Church; was in 1793 a communist, five years later a multimillionaire, and ten years after that Duke of Otranto.

How did this little bourgeois, this Fouché, achieve his high positions? By two methods: by kicking aside men of like ambitions, and, when that was impossible, by nimbly leaping, as fortune shifted, to the side of those coming into power. He served Napoleon, though never with complete fidelity, for several years as Minister of Police. After Waterloo, he swiftly made himself master of France, then sold out to the Bourbons. But the restored aristocrats were against him, the turncoat; and soon, through the instrumentality of Talleyrand, his perennial rival, he was deposed.

Though late, with usurious interest at last Fouché has to pay his debts—has to pay for never having served an idea, for

never having shown any enthusiasm for the welfare of mankind, for having always wooed the perishable favor of the moment and of his fellows.

Zweig's *FOUCHÉ* is in some ways his best biography, being more the life-story of a man than an essay about him. Even here, however, the limitation of Zweig's method is apparent; for Fouché seems less an individual than a type, less a man than a slinking lust for power. Indeed, the biography is a sort of symphony on the theme of power. Fouché was the quintessence of the *genus* politician; and as Fouché was, so, Zweig would have us believe, are, in their varying degrees, all politicians. The biography is another lesson for our age.

In his most recent biography *CONQUEROR OF THE SEAS: THE STORY OF MAGELLAN*, Zweig reverts to the theme of the one versus the many. He sees Magellan as a man possessed by a creative idea, doomed to disappointment through most of his life because of the short-sighted opposition of the orthodox, the powerful, and the cowardly. It is another heroic biography, written, Zweig says, out of admiration for a man who is symbolic of the great discoverers without whose efforts the smooth, far-flung transportation system of the modern world would not exist.

Reading this biography, one becomes uncomfortably aware of an element in Zweig's writing which, though not usually so obtrusive, is present in all his work: his frequent mention of Fate, or Destiny. It is fairly common for a writer to personify fate for purposes of irony, and Zweig sometimes uses fate thus merely as a literary convention. But for him Fate has further significance. The following passage is typical.

From among millions upon millions, Destiny had selected for a great deed this . . . navigator. . . Others received the credit for his work . . . ; for strict as he himself had been throughout, Destiny was even stricter. . . He was not permitted to finish his course. He could only look on, could only stretch out his hand towards the garland of victory; for when he wished to place it on his brow, Fate said: 'Enough,' and struck down the extended hand.

Marie Antoinette was subject to a constant, overwhelming and torturing Destiny.

... With the ruthlessness of an artist who will not desist

from his travail until he has wrung the last possibilities from the stubborn clay he is fashioning, the deliberate hand of misfortune continued to mould, to knead, to chisel, and to hammer Marie Antoinette until all the greatness derived from a long line of ancestors (though till now hidden) had been brought to light.

Granted that the hand we see at work upon Marie Antoinette is the deliberate hand of an artist—is not his name Stefan Zweig? There are many similar references in Zweig's work. Mary Baker Eddy "could not enter the stage until her cue was spoken." Heinrich von Kleist was hunted by the hounds of Fate. A "sombre Will brooded over" Dostoevsky's life. This Will is called not only Fate, but God. Of Rolland, Zweig writes:

His fundamental ideas were not destined to make themselves generally known until there was a world in arms bent upon destroying them.

Envious fate works ever thus, interweaving the lives of the great with tragical threads. She tries her powers to the uttermost upon the strong...that they may be guided more unmistakably in the right course. Fate plays with them, plays a game with a sublime issue, for all experience is precious.

Regarded from the outlook of fulfillment, we discern that all the ostensibly counteracting influences, the years of inconspicuous and apparently vain struggle have been necessary; we see that every incident has been symbolic. The career develops like a work of art, building itself up in a wise ordination of will and chance. We should take too mean a view of destiny were we to think it the outcome of pure sport that this man hitherto unknown should become a moral force in the world during the very years when, as never before, there was need for one who would champion the things of the spirit.

Though Zweig has not stated his position explicitly, it is evident that he believes strongly in a purposive force which rules men, tests them, imposes upon them all manner of harsh experience, that they may live more fully, that they may develop their latent powers. Apparently this force is something supernatural, quite outside of man and beyond his control. To all appearances often malevolent, the force is actually beneficent, for Zweig holds con-

stantly that "thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs." He speaks of "the great plan which mankind fulfils", and declares that "the spirit of development knows how to modify its creatures for its own mysterious purposes." Believing thus in a spirit of Progress which will ultimately conduct man to "one far-off, divine event", he stands in contrast to the many contemporary intellectuals who have quite rejected the idea of Progress.

As Zweig sees his subjects, they are moulded by a shaping force that makes works of art out of their careers. Thus he is unusual among biographers, for he identifies his own dramatic purposes with the laws of life. This purposive doctrine may be dangerous to a historian, for if he frequently superimpose it upon his material, his work may become over-generalized and therefore oversimplified. But Zweig's biographies are not products of a historian. Considered as history, they contain an overplus of interpretation which clogs the narrative. They are products of an essayist and critic who uses the psychological method. Zweig is intent upon classifying his subjects into types and upon solving intimate problems of personality, upon discovering the psychological formulae which will make his subjects credible as human beings under the stress of special circumstances. It is this complete humanizing of his characters—his exposure of their inner lives: their urges, doubts, problems, passions, and sufferings—which has given Zweig's biographies their great popularity. He proceeds through moment after moment of lives, dwelling long upon the climaxes, continually explaining, explaining. He is always reading the barometer of souls, reporting their psychological weather. He is to his subjects, one may say, what A. C. Bradley was to Shakespeare's characters, for his biographies may well be compared to an elaborate analytical commentary on a play. Though we may wonder sometimes whether the play can stand the burden of the commentary, the commentary is, nevertheless, valuable.

The obtrusion into his work of his own view of life detracts, very likely, from the perfection of that work as sheer artistry; but it makes one increasingly aware of Zweig not as biographer merely, but as humanist; not as entertainer but as teacher. For his faith in the ideal of liberalism permeates his work, and it is to be hoped that it will permeate the world, encouraging men to value their would-be leaders for spiritual valor and truly creative strength.

*by Dwight Durling*

## EIN HELDENLEBEN

Unmarked of all except  
The few his spirit's kin,  
Even from youth he kept  
Much company within,

Deeming triumphs cheapest  
Fame, since deeds must be  
Drowned below the deepest  
Dredge of memory.

Monsters slew he, toppled  
Towers, halted the sun—  
All in himself. He grappled  
All enemies in one.

Heroic thought unseen,  
Untouched by time's vagaries,  
Confronts with steadfast mien  
Death's stealthy emissaries.

Still the towering mind,  
Outtopping death or fame,  
Like fire upon a wind  
Sows the seed of flame.

by Arnold Whitridge

## KATHERINE MANSFIELD

[The author wishes to thank Mrs. James M. Bell, of Toronto, Katherine Mansfield's older sister, for permission to use in this article hitherto unpublished letters.]

I am living here with 'relations'—the dearest people *only* they are not artists. You know what that means? I love them, and they've been just too good and dear to me, but they are not in the same world we are and I pine *for my own people*, my own wandering tribe." So wrote Katherine Mansfield from a charming villa on the Riviera to her friend Anne Estelle Rice. And again a few days later to her husband, John Middleton Murry: "It is a great strain to live away from one's own tribe, with people who, however dear they are, are not ARTISTS. These people's minds are about 1894—not a day later."<sup>1</sup> Katherine Mansfield was not conceited; if anything, she underestimated her talent but she was very conscious of being an artist. The underlying assumption so characteristic of the romantic that artists are a race apart, free from the obligations that fetter the rest of humanity, explains the brilliance, the waywardness, and the pathos of her career.

Kathleen Beauchamp was born in Wellington, New Zealand, in 1888, and if only New Zealand had offered the excellent educational facilities then that it does now it is quite possible that 'Katherine Mansfield' would never have been heard of. As it was, her parents decided that the three older children should finish their schooling in England, and in the spring of 1903 Vera, Charlotte, and Kathleen Beauchamp were brought to Queen's College, Harley Street, London. If it was not an up-to-date school as judged by modern standards, at least it opened the eyes of one eager young colonial to a more varied pattern of life than she had known in New Zealand. Whatever defects there may have been Kathleen Beauchamp ignored them. "I lived in the girls, the professors, the big, lovely building, the leaping fires in winter and

<sup>1</sup>LETTERS, 2 vols. Constable. London. n.d.vol. II. p. 24.



abundant flowers in summer. The views out of the windows, all the pattern that was—weaving. Nobody saw it, I felt, as I did." Study apparently played but a small part in her life at Queen's College, though she probably worked harder at school than she remembered. Certainly she devoted time and energy to her 'cello, an even earlier love than literature. The teachers themselves rather than anything they said fascinated her, and she must have spent many an hour watching them, cultivating that alertness to the details of life which gives her writing something of the permanent freshness of an Italian primitive. The picture of the French teacher in the story *Carnation* recalls the classes of Queen's College with peculiar vividness.

How well they knew the little blue book with red edges that he tugged out of his coat-tail pocket! It had a green silk marker embroidered in forget-me-nots. They often giggled at it when he handed the book around. Poor old Hugo-Wugo! He adored reading poetry. He would begin, softly and calmly, and then gradually his voice would swell and vibrate and gather itself together, then it would be pleading and imploring and entreating, and then rising, rising triumphant, until it burst into light, as it were, and then—gradually again, it ebbed, it grew soft and warm and calm and died down into nothingness.

The great difficulty was, of course, if you felt at all feeble, not to get the most awful fit of the giggles. Not because it was funny, really, but because it made you feel uncomfortable, queer, silly, and somehow ashamed for old Hugo-Wugo. But—oh dear—if he was going to inflict it on them in this heat. . . !

He began, and most of the girls fell forward, over the desks, their heads on their arms, dead at the first shot.

During those years of adolescence, London offered everything that her imagination craved. Later, when she had unfortunately burned her bridges behind her, she decided that life in London was intolerable, but for the moment it was very pleasant. Literary evenings at the German professor's house, at which Oscar Wilde was taken very seriously, suggested a world undreamed of in Wellington. It was a world in which Shakespeare, Dostoevsky, and Oscar Wilde were all jumbled together. Out of this miraculous compound could be extracted, if you only knew how, the essence of Bohemia. Art and Freedom loomed very big and

family responsibility dwindled into insignificance. When the time came to return home at the end of the Easter term, 1906, Kathleen was already in full rebellion against the provincialism of colonial life. "To realize one's own nature perfectly, that is what each of us is here for." So Oscar Wilde had said, and it is significant that Kathleen copied the sentence into her commonplace book. But what was the use of talking about realizing one's nature when she was being dragged away from the one place where it could be realized?

## II

Meanwhile Fortune had been smiling on the Beauchamp family. Kathleen's father, Sir Harold Beauchamp as he afterwards became, had identified himself with the commercial and financial development of Wellington, and all his ventures had prospered. The girls arrived home to find that the family were moving into a new house bigger and better than the last one. To everybody's surprise Kathleen was obviously discontented with her surroundings. She hated adapting herself to the other members of the family, and she hated a community where no one had ever heard of Rossetti or Oscar Wilde. In her own room, surrounded by a few treasures; the Velasquez Venus, six small nude statues, and her 'cello, she could close her eyes and summon the sights and sounds of London, but often her privacy would be invaded. One afternoon when she had been induced to leave her refuge and meet some of the friends of the family at tea, she burst out in a way that must have been very embarrassing to the guests: "I loathe this provincial place! Nobody in it understands me, and they haven't any of my interests, and I detest it here!"

In a letter to her sister Vera, written just after she had arrived at home, Kathleen, not yet twenty years old, pours forth her contempt for New Zealand society:

I am ashamed of young New Zealand, but what is to be done. All the firm fat framework of their brains must be demolished before they can begin to learn. They want a purifying influence—a mad wave of pre-Raphaelitism, of super-aestheticism, should intoxicate the country. They must go to excess in the direction of culture, become almost decadent in their tendencies for a year or two and then find balance and proportion. We want two or three persons gathered together

to discuss line and form and atmosphere and sit at the street corners, in the shops, in the houses, at the Teas. People who would quote William Morris and Catulle Mendès, George Meredith and Maurice Maeterlinck, Ruskin and Rodenbach, Le Gallienne and Symons, D'Annunzio and Shaw, Granville Barker and Sebastian Melmouth, Whitman, Tolstoi, Carpenter, Lamb, Hazlitt, Hawthorne, and the Brontës. These people have not learned their alphabet yet. Vera, do you see dawning such a fascinating idea, a sort of P. R. B. in even this dull place, shooting into the sky, breaking over Lambton Quay in green and blue flame, scarlet, purple and silver. . .<sup>2</sup>

Such was Kathleen Beauchamp's opinion of New Zealand; Katherine Mansfield's was very different. One hated her native country with all the intolerance of youth, the other yearned for it with all the passionate regret of a prodigal son. "I thank God I was born in New Zealand," wrote Katherine Mansfield in the last year of her life. "A young country is a real heritage, though it takes one time to recognise it. But New Zealand is in my very bones. What wouldn't I give to have a look at it!"

Fortunately for English literature, but unfortunately perhaps for herself, Kathleen's determination to get away from home was adamant. The yearning to write had been steadily gaining in momentum ever since she left school, and the need for literary companionship pointed the way to London. Her father did everything possible to dissuade her. Certainly New Zealand did not offer an extensive literary market, but, as her father reminded her, *The New Zealand Mail* ran a literary page. He was always casting about in his mind to find means of attaching her to her surroundings. A weekly literary article might be just the thing to tide her over the difficult period of adolescence. The editor of the *Mail* was sympathetic, but Kathleen's first contributions were hardly what he expected. "I don't like your preference for the sex problem story," he remarked. "That's my business," retorted Kathleen and the editor wisely conceded the point. He was really very helpful, for he suggested a magazine in Melbourne, *The Native Companion*, that sometimes did take sex stories.

It was this magazine that paid Katherine Mansfield for her first article, but the editor hesitated to accept her contributions, for he could hardly bring himself to believe that the very mature work

<sup>2</sup>Unpublished hitherto.

of Miss K. M. Beauchamp, as she signed herself, could be original. She had assured him that she was only eighteen, and that her principles were as light as her prose. The young ladies of that age whom the editor knew did not write in just that way. Mr. Beauchamp came to the rescue and assured the editor of *The Native Companion* that his daughter was quite accurate about her age, and that whatever she wrote, whether it was good or bad, was unquestionably her own. He was tactful enough not to mention this letter to his daughter.

Thus Katherine Mansfield's first success was made possible by her father, but instead of its making her more contented at home it made her decision to escape from the family circle even more irrevocable. Now that she had proved that she could write, and the cheque for her contributions to *The Native Companion* was the kind of proof that a reluctant family would have to admit—surely they would allow her her freedom. Mr. Beauchamp was almost at the end of his rope, but he decided to make one more effort. He arranged for her to go with a neighbor's party on a caravan trip through the uncultivated King Country of the North Island. Kathleen jumped at this chance to explore her own country. While she despised Wellington, its ugliness and its provinciality, like all good romantics she felt the lure of the wilderness. Six weeks in a caravan bumping over rough roads, sleeping under the stars or stopping at lonely farms—that was the kind of experience that later might be carved into sketches or short stories. Yes, of course she wanted to go. How deeply that caravan life bit into her imagination can be seen in *The Woman at the Store*, a macabre story not particularly characteristic of her genius but showing how carefully she hoarded every scrap of experience. Years later, when in the desperate quest for health she was dragging her way through an endless succession of second-rate hotels and pensions, memories of New Zealand as the enchanted isle flooded her memory.

But if Mr. Beauchamp thought that these six weeks in the wilds would satisfy his daughter's yearning for liberty he was mistaken. No sooner was she home than the family strife began all over again. Her glimpse of the North Island left her more than ever discontented with Wellington. It lacked the charm of cultivation without possessing the compensating freedom of the frontier. She

writes in her note-book after the return from the caravan trip: "Argue wisely and quietly. Be more than woman. Keep your brain perfectly clear, keep your balance!!! Convince your father that it is *la seule chose*. Think of the Heaven that might be yours, that is before you after this fight".<sup>3</sup>

Katherine Mansfield's official biographers, Miss Ruth Mantz and Mr. John Middleton Murry, have accumulated a wealth of detail about her early life in New Zealand, and they have written in glowing terms of her beating down family opposition, of her determination to get away from home at any cost. Gradually a legend has grown up that the Beauchamps were narrowminded, unsympathetic parents intent on making their brilliant daughter conform to their Philistine ideals. This is not true. Naturally they hesitated before allowing a headstrong, eighteen-year-old daughter complete independence. Thirty years ago, when the family, rather than the individual, was still the unit of civilization, the idea of a girl just out of school setting forth to lead her own life ten thousand miles from home on the strength of nothing more substantial than a yearning to write, must have seemed preposterous. Even today, when girls are as free to leave home as boys, they are expected to have some training or some little experience before plunging alone into the big world. Actually the Beauchamps were most considerate and generous parents. They kept Kathleen at home until she was nineteen. Then when it became evident that she was developing a mania and that she was really pining for a way of life that was impossible in New Zealand, they bought her a ticket for London and gave her a comfortable allowance.

Kathleen left New Zealand on July 9th, 1908, never to return. At last she was free. Her father and mother went as far as Lytleton in the South Island so as to be with her to the last moment. Mrs. Beauchamp may not have understood her daughter's literary aspirations, but there was never the slightest suggestion of a quarrel between them. Mr. Beauchamp was a shrewd enough judge of character to know that Kathleen was sophisticated rather than mature, and that a few more years would have made all the difference to her, but he was too loving a father to constrain her

<sup>3</sup>THE LIFE OF KATHERINE MANSFIELD, by R. E. Mantz and J. M. Murry. Constable. London, 1933.



against her will. It is just possible that, knowing his daughter as he did, the leave-taking required some courage on his part, but of that we hear nothing.

### III

The next scene opens in a gloomy hotel in London overlooking Paddington Station. Beauchamp Lodge—the name was a mere coincidence,—was one of those intensely respectable hotels that cater to unmarried business women. Here on an annual allowance of one hundred pounds Kathleen launched forth on the great adventure of leading her own life. "I am hungry," she wrote her sister Vera, "to buy a little cart, and cry my wares and go into the big market." Now at last she was having her own way. How splendid it was to be able to come and go as you chose, untrammelled by chaperones or relatives. And yet perhaps it was just a little bit lonely. In Wellington a brother or a sister was always bursting into her room, or her mother would invite guests and then expect her to entertain them. London made no such demand upon her. It offered almost too much privacy, too unlimited an opportunity for writing. There were plenty of friends of the family in London who would have delighted to keep an eye on her, but they were not artists, and Kathleen craved no other society. Perhaps she was bewildered by her freedom, but looking back on her life afterwards she remembered that first year away from home, which she had been looking forward to so passionately, as one of the bitterest of her life. Whatever she may have written then must have been destroyed.

In the spring of 1909 Kathleen committed a ghastly mistake, proving that her family were right in their reluctance to allow her complete freedom. Lonely and dispirited, she drifted into marriage with a man she did not love. George Bowden, an amateur singing teacher or professor of music, does not seem to have been an arresting personality. No doubt he was fond of Kathleen and he respected her flair for music. What more could she ask? Poor girl, without knowing it she was hungering for the understanding and the security of home life, for the very bourgeois delights she affected to despise, while the artist colony to which she clung so tenaciously offered her nothing more substantial than a pleasant Bohemian camaraderie. With all her enthusiasm for Bohemia she



never acquired the art of taking human relationships casually. That admirable maxim, 'easy does it', seems to apply to everything she ever wrote, but she never learned to apply it to life. Whenever she had a pen in her hand she was master of herself, otherwise she was at the mercy of the world. The ravenous appetite for experience, the belief that she must prove life upon her pulses, led her inevitably to an abyss of despair from which marriage seemed to be the only escape. She went to the wedding dressed in black as if to a funeral and accompanied only by Ida Constance Baker, a devoted school friend, in whose eyes Kathleen could do no wrong. Ida Baker is the L. M. (Little Mouse) of the Letters, one of those women who so eagerly sacrifice themselves on the altar of friendship. Kathleen accepted her devotion, mocked her not always tenderly, but relied upon her in every emergency. Unfortunately she was too much under the spell of Kathleen's charm to be able to dissuade her from this reckless marriage. Within a few days Kathleen realised that it was all a mistake; she left her husband almost as abruptly as she had married him.

It was a tragic climax to the adventure in independence. This 'Curiously beautiful girl, Slav in appearance and strong minded', as the sculptor Gaudier-Brzeska described her, in her determination to do just what she wanted had so far made a complete wreck of her life. She appears to have led a hand-to-mouth existence as a super in a travelling opera company. Meanwhile the family had heard of the marriage and the separation simultaneously. Mrs. Beauchamp sailed for England at once in the hope of effecting a reconciliation, but Kathleen's decision to separate could not be shaken. Like a poor sick animal wanting to be alone with her pain, she went off to the village of Woerishofen in Bavaria. There after weeks of illness and depression she gave birth to a still-born child.

There were moments when an overdose of veronal seemed the only way out, but with the gradual recovery of health and strength the appetite for life reasserted itself. Woerishofen was a spa and a spa meant tourists, in this case Polish *litterateurs* and unfashionable German aristocrats from whom Kathleen extracted a fund of sardonic amusement. She began writing again, and her sketches of life in a German pension won the approval of

A. R. Orage, the editor of *The New Age*. To be accepted by Orage was the dream of every young writer. An article in *The New Age* meant that you had definitely 'arrived'. These sketches were afterwards made into a book, for which Katherine Mansfield, as she now signed herself, received fifteen pounds in advance royalties. The book was well reviewed, but the publisher failed just as it was going into a third edition, so that no subsequent payments were made. Nevertheless a taste of success and of the self-confidence that comes with success were for the moment more important than any material reward. In later years Katherine was dissatisfied with the rather cynical cleverness of these early stories. It was all very well to write in her journal, 'Nothing that is not satirical is really true for me', but that held good only so long as she was under the influence of Orage. On the strength of the Bavarian sketches Orage had decided that she must confine herself to satire, and it was not until she had escaped from the clutches of *The New Age* that she could try her wings on a more adventurous flight. Luckily there were others besides Orage who admired her work, among them an Oxford undergraduate named John Middleton Murry. Oxford had not satisfied Murry's literary aspirations, and he and his friend Michael Sadleir had plunged gaily into the publishing business. The result of the plunge was *Rhythm*, a magazine of literature and art which the editors hoped would become the *Yellow Book* of the new generation. At Murry's request Katherine sent them a story, *The Woman at the Store*, which was eagerly accepted. Here was something solid compared to which the Bavarian sketches suggest clever pen-and-ink caricatures.

#### IV

Katherine's meeting with John Middleton Murry marks the beginning of a relationship that lasted for the rest of her life. During the next twelve years, until her death in 1923, they lived together, worked together, quarrelled, separated, married and finally convinced themselves as well as their friends that they were indispensable to each other. Mr. Murry has told the whole story with devastating frankness in his autobiography, *BETWEEN TWO WORLDS*. Whatever he may have omitted may be gleaned from K. M.'s journal and from her letters, surely among the gayest

and yet the most tragic letters in the whole pageant of English literature. Courage is always gay, and there was no lack of courage in Katherine Mansfield. The tragedy lies in the restless search for happiness. She wanted freedom and she wanted a home, she wanted friends, gaiety, affection, and love, and while enjoying them she wanted to earn her living by her pen.

Why haven't I got a real 'home'—a real life—why haven't I got a Chinese nurse with green trousers and two babies who rush at me and clasp my knees? I'm not a girl—I'm a woman. I *want* things. Shall I ever have them? To write all the morning and then to get lunch over quickly and to write again in the afternoon and have supper and *one* cigarette together and then to be alone again till bedtime—and all this love and joy that fights for outlet, and all this life drying up, like milk, in an old breast. Oh, I want life! I want friends and people and a house. I want to give and to spend.\*

Katherine never realized that the things she wanted were not to be had without some sacrifice of freedom. A home means housekeeping, and she did not like housekeeping. She wanted to be able to flit over to the Continent at any moment. The Murry-Mansfields, as they were known to their friends, were notoriously difficult to suit. They never learned to cope with the mechanics of life. They perched but they never settled. The flats they took in London were too dingy, the cottages in the country were too damp, the inns were too expensive, and the friends they stayed with, brilliant as they might be, were not always congenial. For some months they lived with the D. H. Lawrences in Cornwall. At first everything went well, so well that Lawrence suggested they should all emigrate to Florida and found an ideal community there, but it soon appeared that whatever rubbish Lawrence might talk about blood brotherhood, the *two ménages* were not getting on together. The relationship between the Murry-Mansfields was a difficult one and the Lawrences made it no easier. Katherine was unhappy because she was beginning to feel an alien in England; Murry was unhappy because he was living off Katherine, and though her allowance was ample enough for herself it was hardly enough for a couple. The Lawrences were forever bickering, and on one occasion at least, if Murry's account

\*LETTERS. Constable. London. 2 vols. vol I. p. 26.

is correct in *BETWEEN TWO WORLDS*, Lawrence in a frenzy of temper chased his wife through the house with murder in his eye.\*

One evening, when Katherine and I were sitting by our fire—in the long room where Lawrence had dreamed that the community would eat together—we heard a shriek. Suddenly, Frieda burst in at the door crying, 'He'll kill me!' Lawrence followed, white as a ghost, but in a frenzy of fury. Round and round the long table they went, Lawrence crying, 'I'll kill her, I'll kill her!' The chairs were scattered: I just managed to save the lamp. Katherine sat still in a corner, indifferent, inexpressibly weary. I was terrified. That he would have killed her, I made no doubt; and yet, for some strange reason, I had no impulse to intervene.

What a strange *milieu* that was for Kathleen Beauchamp, who had grown up in a big family surrounded by love and affection! Wellington must have seemed incredibly far away, and yet she was closer to it in spirit than to the shoddy Bohemian life represented by the Lawrences. A casual reader of her *LETTERS* and of the *JOURNAL*, both of them edited by Middleton Murry, and of the *LIFE OF KATHERINE MANSFIELD*, written by Miss Mantz and Middleton Murry, might gather that the Beauchamps had lost interest in their talented daughter since she left New Zealand. The fact that she sold her 'cello for two pounds, and that the *LETTERS* occasionally mention financial difficulties, has even given rise to the theory that Sir Harold was less generous with his daughter than he might have been. Actually the Beauchamps were the most devoted parents. Sir Harold had a large family to provide for, and though he was a successful man of business he was not a millionaire, but he was consistently generous with all his children. His interests were bound up with New Zealand, and it must have been something of a disappointment to see them one by one leave the Dominion for good. Although he was chairman of the Bank of New Zealand and director of numerous other companies, he never allowed business activities to encroach upon his family life. He always made a point of keeping in touch with his children. His eldest daughter Vera married the distinguished Canadian geologist James Mackintosh Bell, and lived in Ontario. The other daughters all married and settled in England. Kathleen was the

\**BETWEEN TWO WORLDS*. By J. M. Murry. Jonathan Cape. London, 1935 p. 409.

first of them to leave home. Sir Harold found time to visit them all, not once but repeatedly. He went to England to see Kathleen in 1911, and again in 1919 and 1922.

As for the allowance of one hundred pounds, this was supplemented whenever necessary. During the war Sir Harold found it impossible to leave New Zealand, but Alexander Kay, the London manager of his bank, proved himself an invaluable friend. Again and again when Katherine did need something extra he advanced whatever was necessary as freely as if she had been his own daughter. There was no need to consult her father. He never hesitated to confirm any disbursements on Katherine's behalf.

Her letters to her father, of which the published correspondence gives a very inadequate idea, prove that there was a very special relationship between them.

Villa Pauline, Bandal

March 6, 1916

My dearest Father,

This morning I received a letter from you telling me that you had instructed the manager of the Bank to pay me £13 a month instead of £10, as formerly. I scarcely know how to thank you for yet another proof of your unexampled generosity to me, darling. It puts my finances on such a secure and easy footing at a time when so many are in want, and it gives me a very real feeling of security and added comfort. Thank you a thousand times, my darling Father: I am deeply grateful. . . .

I am extremely glad to think that you and Mother and Jeanne are going to Canada to spend some time with dear old Vera. She wrote to me the other day, full of delight at the prospect. I hope you have a successful, peaceful voyage, darling, and I do pray that later in the year we may meet in England. I wish I could tell you, Father, how I long to see you. Our dear one, when he was with me here, seemed to bring me so near to you, and talking of you with him. I realized afresh each time how much I love and admire, and how much you mean to me. Forgive my childish faults, my generous darling Daddy, and keep me in your heart. I feel that we shall have so much to talk over when we do meet. If only this war would end and make the Atlantic safe. It is a terrible, tedious calamity, and the end seems still far away. As I write the papers are full of the news of the awful battle of Verdun, and they seem to agree that the German offensive is only beginning! . . .

Father, dear, I do so reproach myself for writing you a sad letter from Marseilles and thereby adding even a little to your sorrow. But by now I trust that you have had other letters from me, and that I have made it plain that I am happier. Not that the loss of our darling one is any less real to me. It never can be, and I feel that it has changed the course of my life for ever, but I do feel very strongly that I fail in my duty to his memory if I do not bear his loss bravely, and I could not bear to fail him. I often think of you and him together, and I remember the way he used to look at you—a kind of special loving look that he had for you—it is unforgettable. It is truly marvellous how many people were influenced by him, and how many people mourn him. I should



much like to have seen the copies of the letters that Mother sent to Belle, and I hope I do so on my return to England. Chaddie and I write frequently. She is a sweet nature. We are just as natural together as when we were girls and shared the same room together. Do you remember, at Johnsonville, I think it was, coming into our room in the middle of the earthquake and carrying us out into the garden? I can see Chaddie now, who was very weedy at the time and only had a wisp of hair tied up with a piece of pink wool for the night. It must be a long time ago, but I remember Johnsonville very well, even to the smell of it. Like Chummie, I always remember by smells.

Well, dearest and best of Fathers, I must end this letter. Again, from my heart I thank you. I think of you every day, and I long for the time when we shall meet again. God bless you, darling.

Always your own child

Kass

In this letter\* she is speaking of her brother Leslie (Chummie) who was killed in France in 1915. He was the youngest in the family, an only son and a favorite with everybody. Katherine adored him. He had spent a week with her in England before going out to the front and then, almost as soon as he arrived in France, he was killed accidentally by the premature explosion of a hand grenade. His death had the curious effect of temporarily alienating her from Murry and at the same time releasing a rich store of reminiscence which ultimately swept her into fame. Katherine decided that the best way to preserve the memory of her brother was to record everything she could remember of the old life in New Zealand. The *JOURNAL* clearly indicates that her brother's death 'shocked' her, in a literal sense, more than any experience she had yet been through.

I think I have known for a long time that life was over for me, but I never realized it or acknowledged it until my brother died. Yes, though he is lying in the middle of a little wood in France and I am still walking upright and feeling the sun and the wind from the sea, I am just as much dead as he is. The present and the future mean nothing to me. I am no longer 'curious' about people; I do not wish to go anywhere; and the only possible value that anything can have for me is that it should put me in mind of something that happened or was when he was alive. . .

Yes, I want to write recollections of my own country till I simply exhaust my store. Not only because it is 'a sacred debt' that I pay to my country because my brother and I

\*Unpublished hitherto.

<sup>1</sup>*JOURNAL OF KATHERINE MANSFIELD*. Constable. London. n.d. pp. 36-37.



were born there, but also because in my thoughts I range with him over all the remembered places. I am never far away from them. I long to renew them in writing.

So heartbroken was she by her brother's death that Murry complains that for some time he felt quite isolated. "The death of Katherine's brother had cast a shadow between us. Though I was with her, I was isolated from her, and I could not bear it. . . He, though dead, was far more real and near than I was now; and that was anguish to me." Surely there was something fundamentally wrong in a relation at the mercy of such painful egoism.

Katherine reacted to sorrow in a more gallant manner. Those who have read *Prelude* or *At the Bay* will realize how faithfully she kept her promise to her brother. In these stories of New Zealand the mask of cynicism is dropped. The family that she depicts is quivering with life. She could never have done justice to them without breaking away from the old technique of discreet aloofness. Aldous Huxley once said that Katherine Mansfield was like Conrad in that she saw her characters from a distance as though at another table in a café. As a general rule that is true, but when she writes of her own childhood, as in *At the Bay*, she leaves her lonely corner and sits down at a big round table with the rest of the characters. There is an effortless vitality about them all, especially about Stanley Burnell the father, through whose disguise we recognize the strong features of Sir Harold Beauchamp himself. "How terribly he suffered if he thought anyone—she—was not being dead straight, dead sincere with him! 'This is too subtle for me!' He flung out the words, but his open quivering distraught look of a trapped beast." If there is a hint of mockery in that description it is the tenderest kind of mockery. Once we are grown up we tease only those whom we love.

Critics are agreed that Katherine is at her best when she is writing about New Zealand. At other times she may be more brilliant, in such stories as *Je Ne Parle pas Français* or *The Daughters of the Late Colonel*, but the mere cleverness of these stories leaves us dissatisfied. After tasting her exquisite irony we find ourselves asking for something more, for some hint perhaps of the significance of this delicate analysis of triviality.

<sup>1</sup>*Ibid.* P. 42.

Katherine Mansfield herself grew dissatisfied with her work; she felt that it was too petty. In one of her last letters she writes, 'I am tired of my little stories like birds bred in cages', but here she does herself an injustice. Whenever she reverted to the scenes of her early life her writing was not petty. She penetrated further into the recesses of childhood, and she illuminated the realm of family relationships more brilliantly than any other author of our time.

## V

The influence of her father has so far been overlooked in all the critical estimates of her work. What we knew of Katherine Mansfield comes to us through her husband, Middleton Murry. The letters to the members of her own family have never been published. Certainly the letters to her father reveal a simpler and more affectionate personality than Mr. Murry's volume suggest. Her letters to him in the last year of her life show how bitterly she regretted the sorrow she had caused him. On March 18, 1922, she wrote:

How you can possibly find it in your heart to write like that to your undeserving little black sheep of a child only God knows. It wrings my heart to think of my ungrateful behaviour and I cannot understand how I have been the victim of my fearfulness and dread of misunderstanding. You have been—you are—the soul of generosity to us all. Then how, loving you as I do, feeling your sensitiveness and sympathy as I do, can I have made you suffer? It is a mystery. I sometimes wish that we could have been nearer to each other since I have been grown up, and not the intolerant girl who returned to New Zealand with you years ago. But Fate has willed otherwise.

But between father and daughter there was a still more unexpected bond. From him she inherited an excellent constitution. The early pictures of Katherine show us a stocky child who looks as if she had never known a day of illness, as indeed she hardly ever had. No one can compare the sturdy Kathleen Beauchamp with the emaciated Katherine Mansfield without speculating on the cause of her illness. It was only after her first marriage that Katherine ever had occasion to think of her health. In 1910 she underwent a serious operation, and from then on she was never

entirely well. Even when she was not ill the English climate came to have a more and more depressing effect upon her. Early in 1918 a hemorrhage indicated that she had developed pulmonary tuberculosis. From then on her life was a perpetual struggle against illness, alternating between despair and the gayest optimism. Death itself did not frighten her, but she hated the idea of leaving behind her 'scraps, bits, nothing real finished'.

The optimism was another inheritance from her father. He had left school at the age of fourteen, and had had to buffet his way through life without any assistance beyond the gifts God gave him of industry and native intelligence. Like him she was convinced that courage could move mountains. Scratch the surface of Katherine Mansfield, strip away the layer of Bohemianism, and invariably you discover a sturdy little Colonial, obstinate if you will, but infinitely proud of her New Zealand heritage.

The last venture of her life illustrates the curious blend in her character of the artist and the pioneer. Dissatisfaction with her own work combined with the knowledge that her illness was hopeless and that she had only a few months more to live induced her in 1922, during the last few months of her life, to embark upon a curious experiment in spiritual regeneration. George Gurdjieff, by whose help all traces of earthly degradation were to be eliminated, was one of those innumerable refugees who took shelter in Paris from the storms of the Bolshevik revolution. He had composed a ballet in Moscow, and he had travelled widely in India and Tibet, where he had acquired an intimate knowledge of the religious exercises practised in the monastic life of those countries. Armed with this knowledge he undertook to found an Institute at Fontainebleau. The purpose of the Institute, as explained by Dr. James Carruthers Young, who underwent a course there at the same time as Katherine Mansfield, was to provide a *milieu* for the intensive study of oneself in order to develop will power. "The essential in self-observation," says Dr. Young, "is to observe one's mechanisms as objectively as if they were the antics of another fellow, to be constantly taking mental photographs of oneself, as it were."

Katherine Mansfield threw herself into the communal life at Fontainebleau with all the ardor of a disciple. At its best the whole scheme was fantastic, but she was characteristically at-

tracted to any scheme that undertook to cultivate her will power. That was her last weapon against the disease that was killing her. After all, she came of a family of pioneers, men who were accustomed to subduing every difficulty by their own efforts. The doctors had failed to cure her; obviously she must try to cure herself. During those last three months of her life, when she was kept busy digging foundations for new buildings and looking after the miscellaneous live stock Gurdjieff had acquired, she was radiantly happy. This abnormal life in which everything was arranged, or rather disarranged, so that nobody should be allowed to fall into a routine, seems to have had a wonderful effect upon her spirit. But the Institute's régime of intense activity was not designed for patients suffering from acute tuberculosis.

Katherine Mansfield died on January 9th, 1923. Sir Harold survived her fifteen years. At the time of his death he was described by one who had been intimately associated with him for over thirty years as "the *beau ideal* of a business man—with a soul above business." This description of him would have delighted Katherine. In her darkest hours no one believed in her or trusted her more resolutely than he. He hated to think of her suffering, surrounded at Fontainebleau by people with whom he had nothing in common, but it was at least some consolation to him to know that the brilliant, headstrong, lovable Kass had been acclaimed in England and America. In Wellington her memory has been perpetuated in a way she would have loved. The view from her window in the house in Fitzherbert Terrace has been transformed. Instead of the sombre gnarled pines with roots which struggle up through the asphalt paths, Katherine Mansfield would now look out on rock gardens, lawns, and avenues of trees. In the midst of this her father erected a rest house inscribed "To the memory of Katherine Mansfield."

In the cemetery of Avon, near Fontainebleau, a simple horizontal flagstone marks her grave. On it is inscribed one of her favorite quotations: "But I tell you my lord fool, out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety." The spot where she lies has become a pilgrimage, not only for those who admire her exquisite art, but for those too who have learned to love her gallant spirit.

by *Arthur E. DuBois*

## BEFORE LAUGHTER

HENRY BLAKE FULLER: A CRITICAL BIOGRAPHY. By Constance M. Griffin. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1939. 118 pp.

Mrs. Griffin has been able to draw upon Fuller's own writings, to a large extent unpublished, so fully that this "critical biography" might almost be called an autobiography. Yet her contributions are substantial, and the book is properly sub-titled. And because it is a critical rather than a chronological biography, it does not answer many purely biographical questions. As a writer, yes, but as a man, no—Fuller hardly becomes plausible in this volume.

His associations, or his want of them, with men and women, for example, are scarcely exhibited. And, as Mrs. Griffin well knows, it is probable that some of the critical problems may not be solvable till some of the personal equations are defined. Fuller was shy or retiring. But how? For so was Hawthorne. Is it possible, then, that his want of sturdy reputation resulted from his failure consistently to blow his own horn? to a want of personal robustness or presence?

Then there is the constant resentment of women in this bachelor's fictions and the occasional man-to-man theme. The resentment commonly has its sociological implications (at least, more often than in Fuller's neighbor, Edgar Lee Masters), and Fuller usually seems fairly balanced in his creation of men and women: the Chatelaine and the Chevalier are handled with equal tolerance, and neither in meeting the other sex is quite master of his own fate. But there is at least an ambiguity in Fuller, especially in *BERTRAM COPE'S YEAR*, which may be significant of the critic.

The critical problems are varied and more interesting than the personal. Mrs. Griffin presents material to illuminate all of them but makes no effort to say a last word on any. The reason is obvious. An excellent bibliography of "novels and collections", "essays and short stories", "selected reviews", "diaries and jour-



nals", "unpublished manuscripts", "translations", "operas and librettos", and "selected criticism" takes up 21 pages (pp. 92-133). Fuller's previously unpublished "The Red Carpet" and "Carl Carlsen's Progress" take up 14 pages more (pp. 77-91). And for the body of the book the wealth of Fulleriana in letters, sketches, diaries, was obviously so great and tempting that the book practically had to be what it is, mainly an organization and presentation of Fuller explanations.

Like Henry James, Fuller could work in the field of international characterizations and of social, rather than personal, relationships. And like Howells, whom he preferred to James, like Norris, and, later, like Dreiser, who has acknowledged his indebtedness to Fuller, he made realistic pictures with sociologic implications of middle-class dilemmas. The first type is represented by *THE CHEVALIER OF PENSIERI-VANI* and *THE CHATELAINE OF LA TRINITÉ*; the second, by *THE CLIFF-DWELLERS* and *WITH THE PROCESSION*. Fuller lived a long life, 1857 to 1929. Yet unlike James and Dreiser, he never quite "caught on". And even now, one reads his novels under the impression that they are good, strong, and alive. Yet, like Pasquale's picture, they tend to fade soon after. In these few facts several questions are raised.

There is, for example, the problem of regionalism. Despite his many trips abroad, Fuller was never quite in or out of Chicago, scene of his best two realistic novels. One feels finally that he grasped America, or it gripped him, more thoroughly than it did Henry James. But still, his eyes yearned toward Europe, unreconciled to this country and industrialization. As a writer out of his own notebooks like Hawthorne, unlike Poe, Fuller could not live in a boundless world of his own: apparently he grew bored. And therefore one cannot help wondering what environment would have nurtured him.

Then there is the matter of style. Henry Blake Fuller is often called a writer's writer and praised especially for his sense of form. But he wrote very fast. Obviously he was not writing *WITH THE PROCESSION* or *CLIFF-DWELLERS* for the sake of art. After the *CHEVALIER* his diction gets more idiomatic. And it seems to me this aspect of Fuller has been over-polished, even by Mrs. Griffin. *THE CHEVALIER*, for example, is probably his most revised book. But he never did revise out of the first half of it the



apologetic, self-conscious, literary prose that isn't so apparent in even the second half. And from the point of view of form, the first chapter, the story of the elusive Etruscan, while excellent in itself, is certainly a purple patch on the novel.

There is an appearance of facility in Fuller, not merely because he did stories, novels, plays, sketches, librettos, but also because he seems to move from very-high comedy, fantastic or poetic, in *THE CHEVALIER* to the realistic-sociologic in *WITH THE PROCESSION* and back again. Critics have believed that this facility was fatal. But I think it, too, has been exaggerated. For even in the very-high comedy Fuller was always relying upon his notebooks as Mrs. Griffin has amply demonstrated. His methods were those of the realist. And, again, in *WITH THE PROCESSION* or *CLIFF-DWELLERS* his point of view is approximately comic. The realistic method and the comic point of view fit.

Yet it is questionable whether Fuller quite realized himself as a comedian. In *THE CHATELAINE* and *THE CHEVALIER* he worked in the exclusive field of purely intellectual comedy, where his only rival would be, I think, the equally elusive Thomas Love Peacock. Yet he probably had an American and Victorian distrust of comedy. In America comedy is still mainly low, in the direction of the farcical, even in jokes. And therefore, though Fuller might have learned from Meredith and Henry James, he probably under-appreciated the scope and usefulness of comedy and urged himself in the direction of the serious-pathetic.

There was in him a good deal of the poet. Somehow until recently poets have been stubborn to believe that beauty is associable with tears rather than with laughter. Moreover, as Fuller was American he had in him a good deal of the Puritan and a consequent distrust of laughter, of playing and of art, even of the beauty he loved. This distrust always creates ambiguities for the Ezra Pound, John Gould Fletcher, or other American abroad. Fuller needed to be shocked, as American business shocked him, to preach, to symbolize, to moralize. Perhaps America shocked him too much, Europe too little, for comedy which pre-requires sympathy and repugnance. Wandering Willie must *return* home to be a comedian. Or perhaps Fuller never became quite familiar enough with either America or Europe, familiarity being also a prerequisite for the comic. Maybe he never found

his home here or there, so comedy was stopped. And though he might have learned much from Hawthorne he was probably lost between an instinct to laugh and a feeling that he ought to cry, between a distrustful love of the tragic-artful and a scornful worship of the comic-utilitarian.

A statement of these critical problems here and under other circumstances in Mrs. Griffin's book goes partway toward solving the major question, why Fuller did not achieve a surer fame. His failure cannot be blamed on his times, for Meredith and James outlasted the Victorian. Nor can it be blamed on his place. For Dreiser and, again, James, each in his own way out-did America, and Chicago before Fuller died had produced America's greatest single group of writers since the Civil War. With Balzac, Thackeray, Dickens, Meredith, Browning, W. S. Gilbert, and others for precedents and with Cabell, Barrie, James, Shaw, E. A. Robinson, Beerbohm, and others for contemporaries comedy ought not to have failed Fuller.

Ultimately one is returned to the personal. Fuller never married. He didn't have to earn a living, grubbing. He was hardly a member of his family or nation. In short, he didn't touch people except with his mind on the levels of business and society, in the domain of the impersonal, of gossip, talks of prices, wars, and culchah. These levels were his specialty. In a sense he was the man of unfeeling, the intelligent Gervayse Hastings at Hawthorne's "Christmas Banquet". And in poetic or fantastic symbolic realism Hawthorne could have taught him, especially through his tales, how in the realm of the comic not to betray himself on other levels where the real souls or real bodies of persons meet and feel.

But Fuller was continually trying to write of people touching each other personally. And here he failed. An instance is in *THE CLIFF-DWELLERS*, in the unhappy marriage of George, the death of the wife and daughter. These are built up to, but hurried when they are arrived at. Fuller could not feel them and, so, neither can we. And therefore the novel seems deficient despite the brilliance of other features in it. Notably in contrast with Fuller, for example, in *NO STAR IS LOST* James Farrell knew how to feel the burial of even an unimportant little girl in Chicago also during one of its crises.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Meredith has suggested that where comedy operates on certain levels of

In the field of intellectual comedy where people meet without, so to speak, touching each other, Fuller might have been pre-eminent. Of course this very-high comedy is a cultivated taste, caviar to the general, and *THE CHATELAINE* and *CHEVALIER* are it. To be supreme in it, especially in Mark Twain's country, would be better than to be ordinary in comparison with commoner novelists whose puppets love and live and die physically, personally.

Comedy was enlarging its provinces in Fuller's time, both here and abroad. His failures seem to me more interesting than the commoner failures of persons like Simms who have been more often written of. As a reminder and a guide Mrs. Griffin's *HENRY BLAKE FULLER* is welcome.

"civilization," distinctions between the sexes tend to vanish. A comradeship of "intellectual" interests takes the place of personal relationships. Under such circumstances persons are apt to become a bit like ideas, wanting presence; and *The Chevalier* and *The Chatelaine* are undistinguished. Under such circumstances, moreover, emotional attitudes, attitudes of concern, might be mildly assumed by men toward men which men ordinarily reserve for women; for men and women would be equally like ideas. I have known healthy professor to display these concerns toward their students, and they make *Bertram Cope's Year* with its university background of special interest. The attitude is doubtless an aspect of paternalism, and the comedian, having sympathy and repugnance, is in the rôle of the father, who must guard the child in the home but also send him out into the world and who, like the elder James, is ghostlike, apart from but still omnipresent in William, Henry, Wilky, Bob, and Alice. Whatever pathological tendencies may appear in Fuller's fictions, accordingly, he was probably "innocent" in fact.

by Frances W. Knickerbocker

### MORE OR LESS MARXIAN

*FORCES IN AMERICAN CRITICISM.* By Bernard Smith. 401 pp. New York. Harcourt, Brace and Company. 1939. \$3.00.

*FIGURES OF TRANSITION.* By Granville Hicks. 326 pp. New York. The Macmillan Company. 1939. \$2.50.

*THE NOVEL AND THE MODERN WORLD.* By David Daiches. 228 pp. Chicago. The University of Chicago Press. 1939. \$2.50.

On this matter of Marxist criticism, of what it sets out to and what it can do, these three recent books throw a certain light.

Explicitly or implicitly Marxian, they share the same basic assumptions as to the relation of literature to society and the function of criticism in our time. Their differences, which are striking, are not in approach but in critical temper and discernment.

**FORCES IN AMERICAN CRITICISM** is a study of American criticism in relation to social history. Although, as its title suggests, it does not attempt to be definitive, it does cover the whole field. Its viewpoint owes something to Taine, more to Parrington, most to the Marxists. Mr. Smith gives a helpful account of the thesis and method of Marxist criticism—not without the aid of that blessed word “dialectical”. He admits its defects in aesthetic appreciation and even sees the need of integrating the psychological with the social approach; but his book is an example of Marxist temper at its most dogmatic. “Obnoxious”, “objectionable”, “odious”, are the first epithets we meet: surely early American classicism is now dead enough to be treated dispassionately. And since, by Marxist definition, “a work of literature reflects its author’s adjustment to society”, contempt should be as irrelevant in a history of criticism as in a history of scientific thought. It is in part the anti-mystical bias which Mr. Smith candidly avows that makes him, for example, treat Transcendentalism as essentially “irrational”; just as his democratic dogmatism makes him intolerant of every manifestation of “gentility”, that is, refined bourgeois orthodoxy, whether in Longfellow, Lowell, Stedman, or the McGuffey **READERS** (Mr. Smith uncritically follows the modern conventional condescension to Longfellow, ignoring the findings of contemporary scholars like G. R. Elliott.) As to those stalwart defenders of “gentility”, the Neo-Humanists, Mr. Smith labels them “the enemy”. His treatment of the aesthetic critics, those concerned with form, style, expression, is especially scornful: Poe is neurotic and trivial, Henry James snobbish (but what of his appreciation of Gissing?), Spingarn’s *New Criticism* is not only aristocratic but—deepest damnation—“mystical”. On the other hand, one must credit Mr. Smith with restoring those overworked epithets “bourgeois” and “Puritan” to their proper meaning. He does give fair and sympathetic treatment to figures like Howells, Stuart Sherman, and Henry Adams who, though tainted with gentility, worked respectively toward realism, democracy, and the search for unity. Moreover, Mr. Smith does full justice

to the power and insight of T. S. Eliot as the living leader of anti-materialist thought.

Mr. Granville Hicks's *FIGURES OF TRANSITION*, a study of six significant British writers of the eighteen-eighties and nineties, is far more just and tolerant in tone than his earlier American study *THE GREAT TRADITION*; he now realizes that the Marxist approach to literature through history is but one of the "many valid ways of writing about literature". His first chapter on the economic movements and philosophic systems of the Victorian age does scant justice to those positive values of Evangelicalism explored by M. Halévy and others, or to that early Victorian "warfare against barbarism" described by Mr. G. M. Young. To be sure, Mr. Hicks does appreciate the greatness of the Victorians not only as social critics but as writers. But this study of the later transitional figures deals almost wholly with social influences on their *opinions* and hardly at all with their *art*. Naturally, Mr. Hicks is most successful with Gissing, whose novels are so interwoven with his Grub Street experiences; fair as far as he goes in treating Oscar Wilde as a symbol of the artistic revolt against a Philistine civilization; inadequate with Samuel Butler, whose wayward genius is not fully explained by his life as a cautious rebel; very superficial in disposing of Kipling as the Empire builder and ignoring his superb craftsmanship (except for one paragraph on *KIM*) and his philosophy of loyalty in action. And how singularly humorless to see nothing but the "lesson" in *THE JUNGLE BOOKS*! Does Marxism begin in the nursery? With unconscious anti-climax Mr. Hicks ends his chapter on Morris, "It is good that England's first Socialist poet was a Great Man and a Marxist", but makes no attempt to connect Morris's Socialist conviction with the clear vigor of his later prose. And in his most original chapter Mr. Hicks actually refutes his Marxist assumptions: since Hardy's pessimism was not the result of the new scientific concepts alone but of his own attitude and temperament, the art of Hardy cannot be explained merely by the Victorian climate of opinion. There are one or two surprising errors, as that Ruskin was "conventional in religion" and that George Moore "went through life without patriotism". The book is on the whole readable and vigorous but not profound. Its concern



is with the opinions of writers, not their quality, with the materials of criticism, not with criticism.

Mr. Daiches carries on into the twentieth century the study of literature in a transitional, a disintegrating civilization. How, he asks, have the major post-Victorian novelists reacted to this transition? How has it shaped their work, their technique? Their response, he finds, has been to compensate by private truths, by new techniques of expression for the loss of the old common truth. They have, for example, developed the stream of consciousness method of presenting character outside the limits of time and space to express their new sense of character as a process, of narrative as that process at work.

Evidently Mr. Daiches is using a more or less Marxian method to a really critical end. Not content with showing the origin of a novel in its social context, he relates its form to that context and moves from an account of origin to a criticism of value. His estimates are always interesting, sometimes illuminating. He can transcend the present reaction against Galsworthy and see him as the last of the great Victorian novelists, an artist who invests his social theme with finely symbolic values. With Conrad Mr. Daiches is less discerning: Conrad simply will not fit any Marxist scheme: being neither "drawing-room conscious" nor "factory conscious" he must be an exotic—but by that token, so must Hardy. Mr. Daiches cannot pierce behind the romantic geography and atmosphere to the simple, devoted human beings who are at the heart of Conrad's typhoons and revolutions. But he does show convincingly how the problems of the age, the need for a new, personal sense of significance, shaped the art of two of its most sensitive novelists: how Katherine Mansfield's search for truth led to her intense vision of fragments of life; how Virginia Woolf's refining intelligence evolved her lyrical meditations on time, death, and personality. One may not agree with Mr. Daiches's description of Aldous Huxley as a "thwarted romantic", but one need not be a Marxian to feel that Huxley's latest ideal of liberation from time and personality into pure, disinterested consciousness is too remote from our struggling humanity.

The achievement of Mr. Daiches's *THE NOVEL AND THE MODERN WORLD* lies in its four chapters on the progress in aloofness of that amazing genius, James Joyce. For in *DUBLINERS*, Joyce is



the artist observing his environment; in *A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST* he is the artist rejecting it; in *ULYSSES* he is the artist recreating it from a distance; in *FINNEGAN'S WAKE* he makes his final, stupendous aesthetic escape. In *ULYSSES*, Joyce has created not only a self-existent world, a microcosm, but a new type of art in which style takes the place of moral attitude. Mr. Daiches pushes too far his thesis of Joyce's utter aloofness in *ULYSSES*; even in revolt Joyce did not escape from Catholic concepts and symbols. But this brilliant analysis of the aesthetic and technical problems of *ULYSSES* is one of the most acute critiques yet written of that belauded and belabored masterpiece, the symbol of a lost generation and one of the great novels of our civilization.

From these Marxist or near-Marxist studies the questing reader may draw some conclusions. To relate literature to the civilization of which it is a part is a method, neither new nor exclusively Marxist, which may be illuminating. Uncritically used, it may be even more partial and incomplete than the aesthetic, psychological, and Freudian approaches which it attacks. It is best adapted to the novel, which uses the materials of society more directly than any other art; to such individual utterances as the seventeenth century lyric it has little or no relevance. For to explain literature by its social origins is not to estimate its artistic values. And to limit "society" to the proletariat is to apply an unreal standard to existing literature, and to distort its greatest figures. No Marxist theory can explain the genius: to say that "the quality of the individual is determined chiefly by the quality of the community" is just nonsense. The truth is that Marxist criticism is just as moralistic, even at times as mystical, as the bourgeois criticism which it despises. Its slogan is often art for action's sake. Its chief service, says Malcolm Cowley, has been "to introduce non-literary standards that change the rules of the game, that make it more of a science, that bring it closer to life". Its chief defect has been its proneness to ignore the insight of that eminent non-Marxian, Karl Marx, that "certain periods of highest development of art stand in no direct connection with the general development of society". Marxist criticism, far from being a final revelation, is but one limited approach to that imaginative understanding of experience, that heightened consciousness of self and of the world that is the gift of literature.

by Eugene M. Kayden

## MR. ELIOT'S IDEA OF THE CHRISTIAN ELITE

THE IDEA OF A CHRISTIAN SOCIETY. By T. S. Eliot. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 1940. Pp. 104. \$1.50.

Mr. Eliot's *THE WASTE LAND* had for its subject the elements of non-belief, with an impassioned belief in the reality of spiritual and social damnation. This, too, is the conditioning principle of the four lectures under review. The author is relentless and penetrating in his explorations of political life in terms of its spiritual dynamics. I can best express his attitude by the words of Elihu to Job: "Let us choose for us that which is right, let us know among ourselves what is good". And one may not overlook his own evidence, that the Munich peace and betrayal of September 1938 have aroused in him a profounder realization, of the plight of Western civilization,—“the feeling of humiliation, which seemed to demand an act of personal contrition, of humility, repentance and amendment”. Such was the starting point.

Mr. Eliot's fundamental thesis is that social anarchy resides at the very heart of society, partly because secularism stands for autonomous and partial interests, and partly because our liberal, democratic faith cannot withstand the vigorous attack of religious nationalism. Liberalism has destroyed our traditional social habits and our collective consciousness “by licensing the opinions of the most foolish, by substituting instruction for education, by encouraging cleverness rather than wisdom, the upstart rather than the qualified”. He condemns the organization of society (in a democracy) on the principle of private profit, exploitation, unregulated industrialism, leading “to dearth and desert.” Both liberalism and democracy imply a wrong attitude towards nature, which is the same as a wrong attitude towards God. It is, therefore, no longer possible to justify Christianity on the ground that it supplies a foundation of morality, religious enthusiasm, revivalism, and such movements as Mr. Buchman's Moral Rearmament; these are not substitutes for the pristine

truths of Christianity. The empiricism of democracy and liberalism (and all Protestant faiths, Eliot would add) is lacking in Christian truths, proved up to the hilt by the various idolatries of money, success, health, power, comfort, etc., a form of secularism no different at heart than the franker paganism of Germany.

What Mr. Eliot is then propounding is a form of Christian Democracy, under which the Church serves to limit the power of the political authority of the State; a social recognition of Christianity as defining the true ends of human life; an organization of the Established Church involving an hierarchial order, in which the religious life of the masses would be largely a matter of behavior and conformity, while the more spiritually and intellectually conscious and sensitive would form the élite. In a word, the author proposes a unitary religious-social community, one in which all orders of men have their center of interest and loyalty, a society "in which the natural end of man—virtue and well-being in community—is acknowledged for all, and the supernatural end—beatitude—for those who have the eyes to see it".

This conception of a Christian society is naturally Catholic. It is based on the presupposition that in order to abolish social disorders and ills *in fact*, the religious principle must be integrated with the practical activities of society in economics and politics; that in the absence of a religious conviction as to ends, power would inevitably be exercised without limit or restraint. But, as a secularist, I am doubtful it is possible to overcome such evils in fact. There is much to be said on the side of the autonomous religious function of criticism, and there is much to fear that a Church-State system may be used to justify, obscure, and excuse the activities of those in power who are not immune, even after the cleansing fires of reform and revolution, to the temptations of power. A free Church, like a free University, must prize its independence of criticism.

Finally, Mr. Eliot's abuse of our industrial civilization remains abuse; it does not enlighten. The validity of beliefs must rest on the critic's power to check and coordinate his personal experience and the general experience of his time. If Christianity should identify the defense of spiritual truths with the traditional order, and with categories evolved under different conditions of life, there is danger that the Church would find itself on the side of the forces

opposed to democracy and progress, and if defeated, unwittingly contributing to the success of totalitarian socialism. Nor is it enlightening to denounce capitalism as merely a form of economic and financial perversion of ends: if it is a perversion in fact, it is also a perversion of values and of lives, and it is in the lives of human beings that the greatest harm is done. The refined and genteel poet-critic has great love for truth and justice and beauty as objects of contemplation, and there is great strength in his demand for a social order that is value-centered. But he has strangely forgotten the common men and women, to whom democracy is a promise, and Christianity a promise, something to be fulfilled, a reward for effort and action and not a gift. Mr. Eliot is lacking in the sense of ironic contemplation of our social scene. He has been a-slumming, sincerely; but he has not experienced the hell of our economic system, of poverty within abundance, which is the driving force compelling the classes of Europe to identify their means of livelihood with the ends of life; he has not perceived the depths of human misery which drive spiritual values out of men's consciousness. And it is still true that one must be in hell before one sees the consoling Cross arise. Mr. Eliot has not the secret with which to *change life* in a democracy. He is only looking for it.

*by Robert G. Berkelman*

### THE ART AND LIFE OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THE ART AND LIFE OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. By Hazelton Spencer. Harcourt, Brace and Co. New York. 1940. 495 pp. \$2.25.

In this most recent distillation of Shakespearean scholarship Professor Spencer (Johns Hopkins) addresses teachers of Shakespeare and all eager laymen, as well as college students. To

teachers the thirty-one pages of detailed notes and the fifty-six pages of up-to-the-minute, critical bibliography are a time-saving godsend. To all readers the biographical conclusions, the chapter on the Elizabethan theater, and the discussions of each play (the latter occupying a good half of the volume) will be fresh, judicious, illuminating. A fascinating pictorial map of Shakespeare's London decorates the inside of the covers, and spaced throughout the book are scenes of Stratford and pictures of memorable actors.

Occasionally—of course it is inevitable in a survey of this nature—the author's judgments may seem dogmatic and even mistaken; now and then the style, in trying to escape the factual, falls into the prolix; and possibly the detailed stage history of some of the plays could be condensed with no essential loss and some gain in interest and concentration. But on the whole, this work is the best blend of readability and accurate informativeness that this reviewer has ever come across among the handbooks on Shakespeare.

The style, fortunately, makes no attempt at encyclopedic impersonality. Rather, it is refreshingly individual. Professor Spencer not only knows Shakespearean background and foreground thoroughly but also is wide awake in his own century. Wise saws and modern instances abound. He may turn aside a moment to pepper the cinematic "brats of nauseating artificiality", or, while defending Shakespeare for lack of complaisance and deficiency in restraint say: "Men of talent in whom these qualities predominate often succeed as Society painters, kept poets, professors, officials of museums and foundations, members of academies, bearers of titles, wearers of ribbons".

Specialist though he is, the author has erected no walls between Elizabethan drama and the other periods and arts. His writing, instead, sparkles with allusiveness. Benedick and Beatrice "are far from being cater-cousins to Alceste and Célimène or to Mirabel and Millamant". Jacques is a "logician in search of Nature, a pre-1929 realist in search of America and the Emerson he adored in boyhood". The author twits the "outraged contemporary looking down his nose at you and me, my dear reader, because we are fond of Chaplin, Ed Wynn, W. C. Fields, or the brethren Marx, or Feste". The cultists get a backhand

when he alludes to John Donne, a "once neglected but lately overrated poet". A few measures from Wagner's *TRISTAN UND ISOLDE* are inserted to be compared with the verbal music of Cleopatra's death lament. Opportunely he alludes to such as Rubens, Shaw's Bluntschli, Sandburg, and even Mr. Ogden Nash. He is more sprightly and knowing than a professor, according to the vaudeville public, has any right to be.

And beneath this gaiety are good sense and mellow discernment. "In Shakespeare it is the wicked that have the brains. . . Shakespeare does not laugh easily at anyone. . . For Cleopatra he writes one of the best death scenes, by far the finest he gives her sex. . . Henry the Fourth is a reformed fox. . ." Knots of pedantry he cuts gracefully with sharpened common sense.

All in all, here is a volume that every lover of Shakespeare will want to browse through and which he will be the happier for owning.

*by Aerol Arnold*

### D. H. LAWRENCE AND SUSAN HIS COW

D. H. LAWRENCE AND SUSAN HIS COW. By William York Tindall. New York. Columbia University Press. 139. Pp. 231.

IN D. H. LAWRENCE AND SUSAN HIS COW Mr. Tindall attempts to trace the sources for Lawrence's animism for which Susan is a symbol, and, by showing the absurdity of Lawrence's thought and the tradition with which it is connected, to destroy the heretic and those with whom he is allied. Tindall's defense of the historical chapters—which as history are good—is, that while origins may prove nothing where poetic imagination has worked its wonder, as in the case of Coleridge, where it has failed to do so, as in the case of Lawrence, "the absurd raw materials, remaining raw and absurd, assume unusual importance". The



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absurd raw materials Lawrence used are such popular books on anthropology as Frazer's *GOLDEN BOUGH* and books dealing with the wisdom of the east, frequently written by Theosophists or by western converts to eastern religions.

No doubt the author has done a valuable job in compiling from Lawrence's letters, works, and friends lists of books relating to this phase of Lawrence's thought and known to have been read by him. Yet the weakness of the study lies in the animus of Mr. Tindall who, though forced to admit that Lawrence used most books merely as a stepping off place for his own thinking, assumes that Lawrence is a product of their influence and therefore equal to them.

Nothing could be less true. The amazing thing about Lawrence's thought is that it seems never to have changed. In his early books you find in embryo essentially all that you find developed later on. And Lawrence's identification of himself with Susan is another aspect of his passion for flowers and birds and nature in general, a passion early encouraged by his mother.

For brief periods Lawrence was attracted to all kinds of mystical doctrines, but he always returned to his own ideas. Where he borrowed he transferred the values and ideas of others into his own. Lawrence had a genius for misunderstanding ideas similar to, yet not identical with, his. But where someone saw life as he saw it, he grasped his meaning immediately; as for example, his enthusiasm for Trigant Burrow's *THE SOCIAL BASIS OF CONSCIOUSNESS*.

Tindall's hostility to Lawrence is an hostility to romanticism and to primitivism, in particular, wherever it occurs. He is lenient with the early nineteenth century expressions of it, but his hatred for it among contemporary writers is nearly hysterical. By "romantics" Mr. Tindall means all those writers who make a private religion of their art, who

no longer satisfied with honest doubt, still less willing to adjust their emotions to the age . . . took passionate flights from it into all that seemed opposite, into strange cults and mysteries, into philosophies of vitalism and flow, into primitivism, mythology and nonsense.

Included in this classification are such strange bedfellows as Shaw,

Yeats, Butler, Virginia Woolf, Bergson, and innumerable others. The authors he admires are those who were content to rest in a kind of irreligion like that of Henry James, Arnold Bennett, and Lytton Strachey. In fact Tindall shares the view of I. A. Richards that irreligion may not only be good for art, but may even be better.

In essence Mr. Tindall longs for a classical literature, realizing at the same time that "This nostalgia for the classical. . . is perhaps the best evidence of our romanticism". Yet he is not able to accept those who call themselves classicists; such groups, for example, as "the Humanists, the Neo-Thomists of France, the Anglo-American followers of T. E. Hulme, and the Aristotelians of the Middle West". The true classicism of which he speaks can come into being only when writers have achieved "inner unity, especially in times of outer confusion like the present". And until such a time the authors who most closely approximate his standards of excellence seem to be James Joyce, in the discussion of whom he equates classicism with form, and T. S. Eliot, whose flight into Anglo-Catholicism is, at worst, pardonable because it was flight into an organized religion, and "on the whole it would be better for art if religion were kept in church where it can do no harm".

With criteria such as these, it is to be expected that Mr. Tindall reaches the conclusion that Lawrence never wrote a first-rate novel and that he was a literary fraud, "a Father Divine for the literate". This in spite of the fact that, at the start, he excludes from consideration, Lawrence's poetry, his travel sketches, and refers to his short stories only in passing. A more emotional and wrong-headed book could scarcely have been written by one who aspires to classicism.